



Innovation and Good Practice Resource Book

8th Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting



2013

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Young men and women under the age of 30 currently make up over 60 per cent of the Commonwealth's population. By 2015, there will be three billion young people in the world, with 2.5 billion living in developing countries. Indicators as well as recent global events highlight the fact that young women and men will be exposed to more challenges and inequities than any other social group in terms of access to health and education, unemployment and social conflict and inequality. However, young people are more empowered than ever before, and youth led organisations and initiatives are driving change, particularly through the large increase in social media use.

Aside from their material and intellectual contributions, young people offer unique aptitudes and perspectives that must be assimilated into the broader development paradigm and translated into effective action on the ground. Unfortunately, negative perceptions of youth, the failure to help them develop to their full potential, the inability to recognise that investing in youth benefits national development, and the consequent unwillingness and incapacity of society to fully involve young people in a meaningful way have effectively deprived the world of a resource of inestimable value.

This book of case studies has been created for release at the 8th Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting in Papua New Guinea in 2013, with the theme 'Young People at the Centre of Sustainable Development'.

It provides case studies from a broad range of developing and developed countries and in a variety of settings across the Commonwealth. The organisations and projects demonstrate innovative ideas and approaches to youth empowerment, at local, national or regional levels, and across many areas of development, including health care, political empowerment, youth participation, economic empowerment and income generating activities, skills building projects and sports for development initiatives.

The case studies offer member governments and stakeholders a reference tool to strengthen and generate new youth focused initiatives and to assist in closing the gap between policy statements and implementation. In this way, the resource will help increase youth development and empowerment, as well as showcasing the innovative actions being taken across the Commonwealth.

Katherine Ellis, *Director and Head of Youth Affairs*

Introduction

Expanding opportunities for young people is a challenge in many countries, particularly when over 60% of the population is below the age of 30. With no signs that population growth will slow in the decades to come, it is imperative that we leverage the talent and energy of our young people to create dramatically higher levels of prosperity and equality and avoid the latent risks of unemployment and social instability.

By building young people's skills, harnessing their energy, and acknowledging young people's aspirations, would help every country reduce its youth unemployment and fulfil the potential of all young people in order to contribute to economic growth and social stability. Empowering young people with opportunities to reach full potential is both one of the most important challenge and most vital opportunity in today's world.

This booklet has been put together to as a platform for sharing ideas which are solution focused, innovative approaches to youth empowerment. Categorised in terms of economic, political and social empowerment, they offer examples of experience-based techniques which can be implemented in order to promote youth development. The case studies highlight solutions to problems and the methods of how these can be implemented to ensure the approach is inclusive, timely, effective and holistic.

The *Innovation and Good Practise Resource Book* is intended to be used as a guide on how to implement successful projects for youth development and empowerment. These ventures have been shared by pioneering young people and stakeholders across the regions as a method for engagement and idea sharing in order to showcase successful projects which can then be replicated across the global youth arena.

Commonwealth Asia Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs, India

About CAAYE



The Commonwealth-Asia Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs (CAAYE), formed in November 2011 is a joint initiative of the Commonwealth Youth Programme Asia Centre and the Confederation of Indian Industry's (CII) Young Indians. CAAYE is a **'network of networks'** organizations representing and working with young entrepreneurs from India, Pakistan,

Bangladesh, Singapore, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Brunei and Maldives. CAAYE has been established to continually promote the cause of young entrepreneurs in our respective countries. In addition to advocating a more conducive youth entrepreneurship policy from Member governments, CAAYE also engages with the private sector, the media and other stakeholders to champion the cause of young entrepreneurship at the local, national, regional and international levels.

The **9 member organizations** of CAAYE through which the Alliance has access to over 25,000 young entrepreneurs (aged 18 to 40 years) are:

BANGLADESH	Bangladesh Youth Leadership Center
BRUNEI	The Young Entrepreneur Association of Brunei
INDIA	Confederation of Indian Industry's Young Indians
MALAYSIA	Junior Chamber International -Petaling Jaya Malaysia Graduate Entrepreneur Association (PUGM)
MALDIVES	Junior Chamber International-Maldives
PAKISTAN	Young Entrepreneurs Forum, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce
SINGAPORE	Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry
SRI LANKA	Young Entrepreneurs Network, Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industry

Objectives of CAAYE

CAAYE was born out of a realization that though the dawn of the Asian century is upon us, trade within Asian economies is very insignificant. Barriers to trade and political compulsions leave our economies, though some of the fastest growing in the world, cordoned off from our neighbors while we increase our dependence on the rest of the world. As young entrepreneurs, we realize that this is a lost opportunity in our own backyard. We hope that CAAYE and its projects, ongoing activities, bilateral events and capstone Summits will create platforms where networks are built and people-to-people contact sustained over time for the benefit of the young businesses and young in business in Asia.

An entire support system is required to encourage youth entrepreneurship. This support system includes not only education and training but also extends to ensuring fair and adequate availability of seed capital & financial access, infrastructure, regulation and taxation, all of which are designed to encourage young people. Supporting the creation of such an eco-system through direct action and in partnership with the stake holders of our own economies is the objective of CAAYE.

CAAYE has taken on the responsibility to raise a united and constructive voice and to make actionable recommendations to stakeholders and member governments during our interactions. It is historic in

several ways that we now work as an inclusive group to ensure that youth in all our nations have a voice at the table of various regional and Pan-Commonwealth Consultations, and Heads of Government meetings.

CAAYE's Mission and Commitment to Young Entrepreneurs

CAAYE has a mission to create and sustain a recognized body that exists as part of the official Commonwealth process and is able to engage, contribute to and impact the work of the Commonwealth to raise awareness and address the issues of young entrepreneurs.

CAAYE's mission is to be:

1. a network that, through its engagement with governments, the media, the public, all relevant stakeholders and member organizations, champions the cause of young entrepreneurs at the local, national, regional and international level; and
2. an alliance of organizations from economies of the Commonwealth-Asia region that makes measurable progress towards development of entrepreneurship to ensure future prosperity.

CAAYE's Commitment is to:

1. support young entrepreneurs across the Commonwealth-Asia region.
2. build, appreciate and encourage young entrepreneurship culture.
3. create a network between member countries for mentorship, advisory and other relevant support services to young entrepreneurs.
4. contribute to human capital development through education & training of young entrepreneurs.
5. provide information on access to finance and other resources for young entrepreneurs.
6. influence policy mechanism for young entrepreneurial development.

CAAYE Projects and Activities

In addition to advocacy work, CAAYE believes it is also crucial to action projects on the ground to create a better entrepreneurship ecosystem. CAAYE strongly encourages meeting young, inspiring and innovative entrepreneurs to exhibit their excellence-in-action across the member countries during our **Interim meetings** which took place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and the **flagship Annual Summit** in Mumbai, India. Our **'Pipeline Partnership' with the International Labour Organisation's Youth Employment Network (YEN)** for e- Coaching and Mentorship of young entrepreneurs uses the YEN Marketplace platform and connects mentors with world class coaches for developing business plans, exploring funding options and pitching their business ideas. **Other programmes** include Blue Ocean Dialogues Innovation workshops, Ideas Labs, Young Entrepreneur Awards, and Entrepreneurship Curriculum revamp for Universities, among others.

CAAYE's Capstone Annual Summit

CAAYE's first **Annual Summit** was held in Mumbai from 13-15 December 2012, and involved 200 young entrepreneurs from the eight member countries, carefully selected to ensure broad geographic and sector representation. The charts show delegation profiles. The participants undertook field visits to companies across six different sectors, meeting with top management and analysing excellence to learn best practices; hearing from high profile government and private sector guest speakers; build connections to promote intra-region trade; and develop an official communiqué of recommendations to improve the ecosystem of youth entrepreneurship, that will be submitted to the Commonwealth Secretariat for sharing with Commonwealth Member Governments. The focus of the 2012 edition of the Summit is to share best practices and prepare recommendations for improving "access to finance" to young entrepreneurs.

ActionAid- World Food Day Youth Caravans, Kenya

Action Aid's approach to working with youth

ActionAid believes that the **root cause of poverty is an unjust distribution of economic, political or social power** resulting in oppressive structures at local, national and international levels. To overcome unjust power structures, communities need alliances, support and solidarity of broader citizens' groups. Youth networks are key partners with us, in our fight against social injustices.

In practice, **young women and men may be some of the most invisible and excluded groups** - not only within their own families and communities, but also within national and international development. The concerns of older adolescents and young adults – particularly around health, education and jobs – have not received sufficient global attention.

People in their twenties are **entitled to the same human rights as any other adults**. Those in their teens may lack the right to vote (civil and political rights) – but are entitled, at least, to additional social protections. Many youth however, may have the responsibilities of adulthood but not necessarily the associated economic, social or political rights.

Working with young partners in development means that **we are creating the opportunities, developing the capacities and supporting young women and men to be able to fight for their own rights, but also the rights of others in their villages, towns, and cities.**

Campaigning for land rights



Jubilant crowd receiving the Activista caravan

'ACTIVISTA' is ActionAid's youth network, and it is one of the main youth networks that we work with – this also includes local and national youth organisations, movements and wider partners. Activista focuses on mobilising young people across the globe, and one innovative example of their recent work is around World Food Day.

On October 16th 2012 ACTIVISTA joined forces under the banner of ActionAid's International 'Reclaim the Land' campaign, highlighting the need to solve hunger and reduce poverty, with specific focus on the critical issue

of land grabbing and the lack of protection for women and small scale farmers. Building on the success of recent years, ACTIVISTA decided to conduct caravans – also named 'Journeys to Reclaim the Land', collecting evidence and solutions from affected local communities and bringing the voices of small holder farmers, specifically women farmers, to local and national decision makers. ACTIVISTAS were core in all parts of planning and implementation of these campaigns, on local, national and International levels.

As part of 'Reclaim the Land', ActionAid and Activista were calling for legally enforceable, transparent and rights-based regulatory frameworks that ensure security of land tenure and protect women and small scale farmers against land grabbing. Activista supported this call by raising the issues of land grabbing at national and local level to the wider public and by putting pressure on key stakeholders by mobilising and engaging youth in concrete actions.

A country case study: Kenya

In Kenya, the right to land has already become part of the new Constitution, but there is still a long way to go before this right is implemented to the benefit of the smallholder farmers who really need it. World Food Day happened at a time when the government was locking itself in a stakeholder meeting to review progress of the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP). This in effect implied limited participation of key decision makers. With that in mind, Activista Kenya started their journey under the slogan: 'Land is a Right' aimed at ensuring that messages were delivered to the forum through strong engagement of the media. The objectives were to increase media attention on agricultural financing and to influence the CAADP agenda. **More than 9000 farmers were mobilised as part of the journey and a lot of local and national media outlets were reporting from the journey and putting the issue of agricultural financing on the agenda.**

"I have been receiving calls from all over the world about the just concluded World Food Day Activista Caravan and everyone is amazed by what we did. We were able to reach more than 8600 farmers within three days only in Western Kenya. Long Live Activista Kenya! You made it happen!"

Godfrey, core volunteer and Activista coordinator for Activista MT Kenya.

Joining forces and replication

There is no reason why this engaging campaign model cannot be replicated. This could be achieved in a number of ways:

1. Contact national ActionAid offices to find out if they are working on land rights, and if they have an ACTIVISTA network. Or you might also like to explore other rights issues of national concern.
2. Explore how land rights/ World Food Day advocacy strategies can be expanded and developed in accordance with Commonwealth youth livelihood approaches!

Key recommendations on working with youth innovation

- Working with young partners in development means discussing their interest to participate and contribute to all stages of programme/campaign: research; design; implementation; and monitoring and evaluation.
- Youth may want to fight not only for their rights issues but also support and demonstrate that they can contribute to the wider issues of their community. Capturing this and disseminating these examples are crucial if youth in development are to be given greater visibility in mainstream development agendas – including Post MDG agenda.

For further information

www.actionaid.org/partnering-with-youth

www.actionaid.org/activista/world-food-day

www.actionaid.org/activista/world-food-day

Contact: International Child & Youth Rights Coordinator: sarah.huxley@actionaid.org or the International Activista Coordinator: soren.warburg@actionaid.org

Stories from Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), India

Empowering Rural Youth Through Community Participation

Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) is an innovative network and grass roots organisation operating across India. It was established in the nineties as an autonomous organization under the Government of India, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. NYKS is now amongst the largest grassroots level organization of its kind in the world. Networks of youth clubs attracting young people between 13 – 35 years have been set up in many villages and rural communities across India under the NYKS umbrella.

NYKS provides a unique opportunity for rural youth to be part of the process of nation building at local state level, and to be connected to larger issues of national unity in India. An important feature is that the programme and activities of the youth clubs respond to needs of the local community/ district. Young people in these village-based Youth Clubs embark on projects that will benefit the community and reflect principles of volunteerism, self-help and community participation. They receive valuable training and skills that prepare them for employment, including self-employment. They benefit from opportunities for the development of their personality and skills, and are part of vast network of support through NYKS's link to local and state level government sources, private sector and multilateral agencies.

This Case Study describes four distinct initiatives of the NYKS in different communities in India that illustrate young people social and economic participation for individual and community development. The initiatives are:

1. Supporting the Soil Fertility and Nutrient Management Plan for Agro Ecological Zones, Kerala
2. The Girivikas Development Project For Students From Tribal Populations;
3. Sewak Project for Self-Employed Workers Association Kendra
4. National Service Scheme (NSS)- Encouraging Youth Participation In Cultural Heritage

Supporting the Soil Fertility and Nutrient Management Plan for Agro Ecological Zones, Kerala

As a part of its voluntary project outreach, the Kerala Zone of NYKS joined forces with the Kerala State Government to support soil sample collection under the **Soil Fertility and Nutrient Management Plan for Agro Ecological Zones in Kerala**

This project was promoted jointly by the State Planning Board and the Department of Agriculture Govt. of Kerala. It lasted from November 2010 to the end of 2012.

The Soil Fertility and Nutrient Management Plan for Agro-Ecological Zones in Kerala is a unique scheme initiated jointly by the State Planning Board and the Department of Agriculture, Govt. of Kerala. Under this Plan soil samples from across the State are collected and analysed to ensure that soil remains rich in nutrients to ensure good crop yields.

According to the Department of Agriculture, Govt. of Kerala, for the first time in the country, a State has undertaken the analysis of eleven micro nutrient components in the soil, and nutrient card given to the farmers.

The exercise saw three thousand village level volunteers deployed to collect soil samples from 978 panchayats (villages) in the State. This exercise was preceded by extensive training to the 3000 village level youth volunteers, 157 Block level Supervisors, 14 District level Project Managers. Young people from the district youth club were selected to fill the project needs for the different tiers of responsibility. One state level project manager from the Department of Agriculture/ Planning Board coordinated the effort.

Prior to deployment, training was provided to the youth volunteers in soil sample collection techniques, documentation of the sample collected, transportation of the samples to the appropriate laboratories, and in submission of periodical progress reporting to the State Planning Board and the Department of Agriculture.

Special training was given to the District Youth Coordinators (DYCs) and the Account Clerk-cum-Typist (ACTs) in the Zone, for the successful management of the project.

Once the volunteers collected the samples and submitted them for analysis of micro-nutrient deficiencies, they were also involved in follow-up work with respective farmers to communicate the results of the testing so they could action where necessary to increase soil fertility and eventual crop yield.

The most challenging part of the project was collecting the actual 300,000 soil samples from across all 978 Panchayats in Kerala. NYKS successfully completed the assignment within the stipulated timeframe. The project is commendable as the farmers have started seeing higher yields.

Girivikas Project, Palakkad – Education and Development Opportunities for students from tribal populations.

Girivikas is a special project implemented by Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) in Palakkad District since 2005. This 20 year old project has contributed immensely in transforming the lives of tribal populations in the Kerala District. The project is geared towards providing residential based educational coaching and a congenial environment for students from tribal populations in the Region so they can succeed at their studies and exams. The project works to provide support for students to enable them to pass their Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC)/Plus Two. Students also receive coaching in personal development and life skills education including aspects of hygiene, discipline and the value of hard work.

The project is implemented with financial support of the Scheduled Tribe Development Department, Government of Kerala. The implementation of the project is closely monitored by the District Advisory Committee on Youth Programmes chaired by the District Collector.

The basic strategy of Girivikas project is based on volunteerism and the “Gurukulam” approach. The emphasis is on the creation of suitable atmosphere for study and constant motivation. Students from these populations tend not to have access to the optimum physical infrastructure or support structures in their home or communities to foster learning and achievement. As such, pass rates from tribal populations at these important examinations are very low. Meanwhile, achieving success at the SSLC/ Plus TWO examinations is a major criteria and stepping stone for employment and advancement to higher education.

Student selection for the Girivikas project is conducted through walk-in-interviews held after the results of SSLC/Plus Two examinations are published. Only those students, who failed the SSLC/Plus two examinations, are selected for coaching. Classes are conducted in line with Plus Two syllabus, and coaching is given by the qualified volunteers of the Nehru Yuva Kendra including Ex-National Service Volunteers (NSVs).

At present 50 students from district tribes are receiving coaching in Girivikas, Malampuzha. The students are provided with free boarding, lodging and coaching at Girivikas Educational Complex at Malampuzha.

The project has been successful in promoting education among the tribal communities, who are among the most vulnerable within the society. So far, **1035** students from these district tribes have received coaching through this project and **893** students have successfully negotiated the qualifying examinations. Ultimately, the project has paved the way for hundreds of youth from tribes to gain employment in government and public sector agencies. Girivikas project has proved that these students from tribal populations are no less capable than others to receive good scores in their exams, and they could actually perform better, if they are provided with proper coaching, learning environments, motivation and suitable facilities for their studies.

The major contributing factor to the success of this project has been the sustained efforts to maintain a good rapport and working relationship with the tribal populations and the Department of Tribal Development. The State Planning Board has identified Girivikas as a model project for tribal development. The project is managed by a team of dedicated volunteers including Ex- National Service Volunteers (NSVs) and its main achievements can be summarised as follows:-

- Girivikas project has proved to be a successful endeavour in promoting education among the Tribal communities, the lowest strata of the society.
- Out of 1035 Tribal students who underwent coaching in Girivikas, 893 students qualified for higher studies.
- Basic infrastructure facilities have been created to run the project. The Girivikas Educational Complex comprising of Classroom and Hostel Buildings was constructed at an estimated cost of Rs.65 Lakhs under Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana (RSVY) scheme of Planning Commission of India in 2005.
- The project has paved the way for hundreds of tribal youth to get employment in various Government Departments & other Public Sector Undertakings.

SEWAK Project - Self-Employed Workers Association Kendra: Providing Skills Training and Jobs for Youth

Unemployment is one of the major problems faced by rural youth today. Even though a number of schemes are being implemented by various Government Departments to provide self-employment to the youth, a large number of youth still continue to be unemployed. Lack of technical training, unawareness of available opportunities, lack of motivation, and declining entrepreneurship are some of the reasons attributed to the large scale unemployment among rural youth.

To address this vital issue, Nehru Yuva Kendra Palakkad started an innovative project called SEWAK during the year 2000-2001. SEWAK is registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. Its prime objective is to provide quality entrepreneurship and employment generating services to improve the

living conditions and livelihood opportunities of young people between 15 to 35 years from the most challenged and economically disadvantaged sections of the society. These young people are provided with quality advanced training in various vocational fields so they can become self-employed. Trained youth then become part of SEWAK Skilled Workers Panel and they are eligible to work on several public work projects for the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and other Government and other quasi-government agencies in the Region. Through these projects, sustainable employment is provided to trained youth.

The Government of Kerala has approved SEWAK as an implementing agency for the specific public works that will require services in the line of the training in trades that SEWAK beneficiaries receive: plumbing and sanitation works, electrical and house wiring, and mechanical works among others.

SEWAK operates as a non-profit, self-financing agency. It has its own office building-cum-vocational training centre which was constructed under a Special Central Assistance (SCA) venture. One project manager with an Engineering Degree and one Accounts Assistant manage the day-to-day activities of the project. SEWAK's policy making body is its Management Committee headed by the District Collector.

SEWAK's work over the years can be summarised as follows:-

- SEWAK has made remarkable achievements in generating employment avenues for poor and disadvantaged communities by mobilizing resources locally.
- 60 to 80 young, from disadvantaged sections of the society, have access to regular and continuous employment through the project every year.
- These trained youth are able to generate employment earning approximately Rs. 45 to 50 Lakhs every year.
- The State Government and the District Planning Committee have approved SEWAK as an Implementing Agency for the works of PRIs in the district.
- The project is run on a self-financing basis and non-profit basis.

National Service Scheme (NSS)- Encouraging Youth Participation In Cultural Heritage

Commonwealth Plan of Action 2007-2015

Action Point 5: Promote positive role models and foster young people's self-esteem.

5.7 Encourage the protection of natural resources and environmental heritage.

PAYE 5 Indicator: Numbers of young people who are members of historical/environmental conservation groups.

The National Service Scheme (NSS) is one of the flagship programmes of Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports aimed at developing character and personality of students and youth in schools and colleges. NSS has more than 3.2 million student volunteers spread over **16,885** colleges and technical institutions and 10762 senior secondary schools to carry out development activities in **26,202** villages and urban slums.



Volunteers guiding the tourists

Since its inception, more than 400,700 core students from Universities, Colleges and Institutions of higher learning have benefited from the NSS activities, as student volunteers. The activities of NSS volunteers includes community development, environment conservation, conservation of cultural and historical heritage, health, public sanitation and personal hygiene, rural development, education and emergency interventions including trauma care, initial counselling and data collection. NSS volunteers have always come to the forefront to extend voluntary service in natural disasters such as drought, floods, cyclones and earthquakes.

In one of its more recent initiatives, last year (2012) in preparation for World Heritage Day, the volunteers of NSS Unit of St. John's College, Agra were trained by the officials of Archaeological Survey of India about the historical preservation and conservation issues were enlightened about the protected monuments of the country. This training responds to a need for young people to be more aware and involved in promoting knowledge about the rich relics and heritage sites of India.

Given the enthusiasm of the volunteers, they were assigned with the task of handling visitors at the Tomb of Itmad-ud-Daulah, a famous mausoleum in India, which is often regarded as a blue print for the Taj Mahal. The volunteers were fully and enthusiastically engaged as tourist guides on World Heritage Day 2012, performing the range of essential roles from welcoming tourists, guiding them to ticket counters, selling tickets, checking the tickets, conducting security checking and providing history briefs to visitors about the Tomb of Itimad-ud-Daulah's Tomb. On that day, these volunteers sold tickets for more than Rs. 50,000 and 225 visitors were assisted and guided in visiting this important historical site.

This initiative has helped to raise awareness about protected historical sites of national importance. The involvement of NSS Volunteers was appreciated by Archaeological Survey of India, which credited the volunteers for the success of this initiative.

The Garden Project: A Junior Achievement Approach, Barbados

Executive Summary

The Garden Project: A Junior Achievement Approach was a mezzo-level school-based intervention launched by the Youth Development Programme utilizing synergies with public and private sector agencies: Junior Achievement of Barbados Inc., Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Education.

The project is consistent with the mandate of the **National Youth Policy of Barbados 2011** (pp42) Division of Youth to develop an entrepreneurial spirit in young people and gear them towards self-employment and enterprise creation.

“The Ministry of Family, Culture Sports and youth, will join forces with the Ministry of Agriculture ...in mobilizing young people and preparing them for employment in agriculture and its related fields”.

The project hypothesized that young people could be brought back into agriculture using a cognitive behavioral methodology in a group work setting. Secondly, that, this experiential and participatory approach would be an effective medium to provide young people with an innovative and exciting introduction to agriculture while teaching the principles of entrepreneurship and cognitive restructuring.

The findings of the evaluation of the project illustrated a high level of success in meeting project objectives in relation to young people internalizing of the concepts of agriculture and entrepreneurship as well as future interest in developing projects in greenhouses and agro-processing.

Rational

The project rationale was based on the national imperatives of a small developing country and the need to develop creative initiatives for employment creation and enterprise generation and decent work in a postmodern society. Development imperatives that are critical in the context of a global recession and the possibility of jobless recovery in the short term.

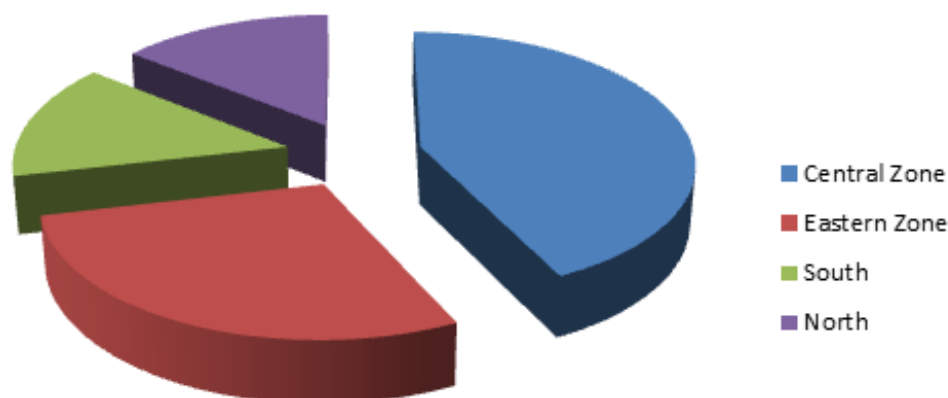
The project is also significant given that the historical context which suggests that young people are two times more likely to be unemployed than older person. Research has revealed young people are the highest affected by unemployment and its harsh effects and more at risk for social deviance.

Secondly, the project emerged when there was much consultation with young people to create a policy framework for the development of agriculture within the country. Barbados has historically been an agricultural based society and its survival lies in the ability to attract young people into the industry not only as workers and producers of food but also as innovators and entrepreneurs to enhance food security.

Participating Schools

Overall, some seven schools participated in the project. Figure 2 shows the distribution of schools by zone.

Figure 1: *Participating YDP Zones*



Project Scope

The objectives developed for the project were consistent with national imperatives. It was projected that young people would be introduced to agriculture, be exposed to the principles of entrepreneurship and that the training environment would ensure that the necessary core values for national development would be inculcated.

Prior to implementation, a number of stakeholder meetings was held. Organic agriculture was chosen as the focal area. Participants were introduced to the innovative pyramid garden methodology which allowed for intensive planting with a variety of crops in a small space. Moreover, facilitators exposed participants to training in agri-market, entrepreneurship education and agricultural methodologies. The production calendar was set for six weeks.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The internal monitoring to ensure the integrity of the programme was attained through site visits and feedback from participants, the principals, teachers and facilitators about the progress of the project. The major evaluation mechanism was the participation of schools at the **Agro-fest**.

Outcomes

The feedback indicated satisfaction with the increased participation by schools through the project. Two of the schools received monetary prizes and gift certificates. There is commitment to enhance the promotion of agriculture in Barbados among young people.

Other outcomes include:

- An increase in learning of the concepts in financial literacy and agriculture.
- Work preparedness - participants reporting greater appreciation of the jobs in agriculture and how Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) applied.

- Knowledge of concepts of entrepreneurship such as: ability to impact the home economics by planting herbs and produce to reduce money spent at the supermarket; selling produce and herbs to earn income; and the importance of re-investment in the business.
- Appreciation of marketing, selling and communication.
- Interest in agriculture and the culture on entrepreneurship.
- Fostering of innovation in the students' approach to crop production.

Conclusion

Overall, the project was innovative and a novelty to participants and met the objectives. Further expansion and sustainability of these projects will require more resource persons with expertise in agriculture and skills in entrepreneurship.

The Job Education and Skills Development - Job Link-Up Programme, Anguilla

'If at-risk youths are not led toward responsible adulthood and self-governance, the burden to society may include an increase in crime and welfare costs, increased expenditures for prisons, and decreased economic productivity'. Oles & Nelson (1995)

Background



Increasingly attention is being given to the issues associated with “at-risk youth” including youth crime, violence, teen pregnancy, substance abuse and poor academic performance. Research shows that at-risk youth struggle with complex issues that are brought on by peers, mentors, family members, and difficult social environments. In addition to these social issues, Anguilla is facing a downturn in the economy, where a number of projects have stalled, the private sector has drastically reduced recruitment and

the Government has also ceased hiring and implemented a number of austerity measures.

These actions have significantly impacted on employment and employment opportunities, thus offering very minimal or no employment opportunities particularly for that segment of the population that can be characterized as at-risk.

The increased complexity of today’s at-risk youth has forced agencies to work in finding solutions. As a result of this, the Department of Youth and Culture launched the Job Link-Up initiative in 2009.

The Programme

Job Link-Up is an initiative targeted at young people from the ages of 15 and 24 who are considered ‘at-risk’ of remaining unemployed. Within the framework of this initiative, “at-risk” refers to those young persons who, due to particular socio-economic factors may experience greater difficulty in finding a job and integrating into the job market; thus they are considered to be involuntarily out of work.

For this programme, those considered ‘at-risk’ must exhibit 3 or more of the following “hindering” factors:

- a) non-completion of high school;
- b) personal disability;
- c) current or past health and or substance abuse related problems;
- d) the individual is a single parent;
- e) low levels of literacy and numeracy;
- f) English is a second language;
- g) regular contact with justice, probations, child welfare or social assistance systems;
- h) homelessness, or at risk of becoming homeless;

- i) inadequate social supports (family, friends or community supports);
- j) poor self-and/or behaviour-management.

Each young person attached to the programme is assisted in developing action plans that plot their entry into the workforce. These action plans includes individual counselling, group counselling, job shadowing, mentorship, job placement, academic and skills training coupled with ongoing personal development sessions.

The concept behind Job Link-Up is that by completion of each programme cycle, participants would have been fully integrated into the job market. Each programme cycle runs for 6 months and targets 15 at-risk youth per cycle.

Selection and Remuneration

Young people accessing the **Job Link-Up** programme must be referred by a select group of referral agencies, through the 'Job Link-Up Referral Form'. These agencies are:

- The Departments of Social Development, Probation and Education
- Her Majesty's Prison
- The Youth and Community Development Centres
- Churches
- CBOs

All decisions concerning acceptance to the initiative are made by a management team. After reviewing the forms, an initial short list of potential clients is made. These clients are then interviewed. The clients selected to commence a cycle must:

- Be between the ages of 15 and 24 years on entering the programme.
- Possess at least 3 or more of the stipulated 'at-risk' factors.
- Demonstrate willingness to commit to the completion of the programme.
- Demonstrate willingness to positively adjust his/her lifestyle.

The following remuneration is provided to clients attached to a workplace:

- Clients from 17 to 24 years old receive a minimum monthly stipend of EC\$1000.00 (USD368.00)
- Clients ages 15-17 (school aged) are only attached to a work place for the maximum of 16 hours a week. They receive the minimum weekly stipend of EC\$80.00 (USD30.00)

Remuneration is provided to clients along the agreed ratio: Department of Youth and Culture 60%; and the agency of employment 40%.

Management and Support

Job Link-Up is managed by the Department of Youth and Culture and assisted by a Core Team comprising of staff members from Departments within the Ministry of Social Development. That team is responsible for the regular evaluation and monitoring of the initiative, with the objective of adjusting the programme's action plan when and where necessary, as well as soliciting and noting recommendations from programme participants and stakeholders for further development of the initiative.

Other features are as follows:

- A **field officer** is employed to identify interested and potential employers and identify appropriate areas of placement for each of the selected programme participants.
- A **Career Guidance** coordinator assists with the development of individual action plans.
- A **mentor** is assigned to each programme participant. He/she is responsible for the regular monitoring and support of each participant while they are attached to the programme and up to 6 months upon completion.
- **Scholarships** for continuing education are being sourced through the Ministry of Social Development-Department of Social Development.

The programme is also supported by public and private agencies, NGOs and CBOs.

Impact

The Job Link-Up programme, which runs for a six (6) months cycle has an annual budget of EC\$56,601.41 (USD20, 833.00). From the inception of the programme in 2009, Job Link-Up has assisted seventy-five (75) young persons. Of these persons, five percent (75%) successfully completed the programme and approximately forty-five percent (45%) have gained fulltime employment. From the experience gained through this initiative, some participants have ventured into their own small enterprise.

In addition to gaining fulltime employment, reviews have shown that participants now possess greater self-confidence, have enhanced social skills and are making a more meaningful contribution to their communities.

By engaging these “at-risk” youth in a structured programme, they are afforded personal development and employment skills, employment and opportunities for further education. This has reduced their interest to participate in deviant behaviours.

Recommendation

In moving forward to enhance the impact of the programme the Department of Youth and Culture will work to develop a **mentorship component** whereby a pool of mentors can better support the programme.

Conclusion

Job Link-Up

- Demonstrates the aim of ensuring that opportunities are provided to our at-risk youth.
- Enables positive social, emotional and intellectual growth and development of at-risk youth.

Ginigoada Bisnis Development Foundation, Papua New Guinea

The Ginigoada Bisnis Development Foundation was founded for the purpose of providing help to disadvantaged youth, in the form of basic vocational type skills development. The intention or hope was that the young people would then utilise these skills towards seeking employment or running their own IGA (income generating activity).

Although the Foundation started off in a small way back in 2002, the numbers of participants enrolled through the foundation into short term skills training courses has increased each year, with some 1,378 graduating at the November 2012 ½ yearly Graduation Ceremony. The 2012 enrolment totalled some 2,400 for the year.

Unfortunately in Papua New Guinea, due to a combination of factors such as cultural attitudes, cost of school fees and access, many people have received little or no education. As these children become teenagers, as their desire for possessions and experiences increase, so too does the level of criminal and antisocial behaviour amongst the young men, and personal vulnerability amongst the young women, increases. This results in an increase in the communities of alcohol and drug abuse, property theft and personal crime, sexual assaults and prostitution. Disconnection, despondency, poverty, low self-esteem and a negative outlook on life are not the ingredients towards building safer communities.

The Ginigoada Foundation is to some extent an ‘intervention’ into the lives of these youth, where they are given an opportunity and hope to realise a better life. The transitioning of young people from being unconnected, unemployable and unemployed, to connected and employable, better equips them for employment therefore the progression of participants through the training pathway towards their own IGA is a valuable result of this program.

The methodology employed is simple. However the actual workload is demanding as many of these participants need to be carefully mentored and micro-managed along the pathway.

Genesis of Ginigoada Foundation

In 2001 Dame Carol Kidu the Member for Moresby South Electorate, and David Conn the President of the Port Moresby Chamber of Commerce & Industry, met with community representatives to discuss the plight of youth in the Moresby South Electorate, and the need to address significant associated urban safety and law and order issues.

It was clear to those present that there was a direct correlation between the high levels of youth deemed “unemployable” and the social issues in the community arising from the idle or unemployed status of these youth.

There was also at that time a realisation that the employment market in Port Moresby was not growing substantially and that for many of these youth, their main hope was to develop skills that could be utilised in the informal sector, deriving income via an IGA.

From its start in the Moresby South District, the Ginigoada Foundation has spread its remit over the year to cover the entire Metropolitan area of the City of Port Moresby.

What we do

The Ginigoada Bisnis Development Foundation was specifically established with an emphasis on 'Bisnis Development', that is, with a focus on providing placements for participants into an array of short term skills training that could be the foundations tone for an IGA.

Participants were inducted into Ginigoada via a 1 day workshop on 'Basic Business Awareness'. This workshop opened up interactive discussion on IGA's and introduced the participants to the potential of what they could achieve through skills development and the utilisation or adaption of those skills toward conducting their own IGA.

These courses were sourced through a variety of training providers, with the bulk of the training being delivered through Government Vocational Training Centres.

The innovative components of this training are:

1. Courses are short term, with the bulk of these courses being only 4 weeks in duration
This allows participants who have not previously or recently attended any long term training to successfully pursue and complete a course in a matter of weeks, not months or years.
2. Courses are 'purchased' wholly by Ginigoada
This allows Ginigoada to place participants into these courses without any specific or particular prior learning or standing academic attainment.

Participants make a small co-contribution in the form of a commitment fee. This is kept minimal, but is important that the participant contributes and values the training being offered.

In 2010 the Asia Foundation funded Ginigoada to conduct a Mobile Training Program (Young Skills Program) that would deliver a 2 week pre-skills training, personal skills training course. This course includes personal finances, conflict resolution, communication skills, introduction to OH&S, personal hygiene, and a number of other topics that collectively better prepare the participant towards entering into vocational type skills training and employment.

At the end of 2011 the Digicel Foundation Funded an additional Mobile Training Program (Future Skills) that delivers workshops on topics such as sexual health, GBV, and modern money, and a 1 week course on Basis Business Skills.

Who?

The key participants are young people drawn from across the National Capital District. In 2012 Ginigoada partnered with the Governor of NCD, Port Moresby Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Yumi Lukautim Mosbi Projek (YLM), National Capital District (NCD), Urban Safety Unity, and Government Vocational Schools, and NGO & FBO training organisations.

And the Port Moresby Chamber of Commerce & Industry 'On Job Training & Employment Desk' assisted GBD to place more than 600 participants into opportunities provided by its member companies and organisations.

Ginigoada has had various donors and sponsor support over the years, and this continues to vary from year to year. The Governor of NCD in 2012 placed Ginigoada into the NCD budget to ensure that the Foundation would receive funding via the NCD each year.

How?

In 2012 the Ginigoada Foundation enrolled the following participant;

Young Skills Bus	2,182
Future Skills Bus	2,979
Short Terms Skills Training Courses	2,429
Basis Business Awareness Workshops	524

When?

Our programs are ongoing subject to funding. We constantly review our programs and selection of training courses, and are continually adding new courses as they become available, however our core functions remain unchanged and ongoing.

Where?

To date our programs have only run in the National Capital District however we are working with other groups to see what components of our programs can be replicated into other areas and provinces in Papua New Guinea. We have also had groups from other countries that have visited our programs to examine what we do with the view of replicating or adapting some of our program ideas into their situation.

Conclusion

A teacher holding a beaker of oil asked his class the question, *“what is more important, the quality of the oil or the shape of the container into which it is poured?”*

Often programs are developed on the ‘shape’ they desire participants to be fashioned into, rather than a quality of material and presentation that is able to flow into lives of any shape.

Our philosophy is that we ‘give people a start, not a finish’, and that is achievable. We ‘pour’ into the participants all the ‘good oil’ we can, encourage them as much as is reasonable, but allow them to take charge of what ‘shape’ they choose to be.

The HUB, Singapore: a partnership programme with the National Youth Council, Singapore

Executive Summary

The National Youth Council (NYC) plays a key role as national coordinator of youth affairs. Together with leading Youth Sector Organisations (YSOs), NYC provides a supportive environment and structure for youth leadership development, youth advocacy, and community impact. One of NYC's key partners is The Hub Singapore, which is part of a larger global community with over 32 Hubs, and 5000 members in five continents.

Since its set-up in June 2012, The Hub Singapore has been serving a growing ground-swell of young social innovators and enterprises in Singapore. To date, they have organised 100 initiatives that have provided 2000 social entrepreneurs and youth sector leaders with collaborative platforms for partnership networking, knowledge transfer, and developing innovative solutions. They have also launched three Hub Fellowship Programmes, which provide a systematic identification of and support to outstanding entrepreneurs in running entrepreneurial ventures for sustainable impact.

Background

Over the last 20 years, Singapore has seen an evolving youth landscape. Youth today are more outward looking and entrepreneurial and have a desire to give back to the community either as individuals or through setting up social enterprises and non-profit organisations. This is clearly seen in the increase of about 7% in the national volunteerism rate amongst young Singaporeans from 2010 to 2012¹.

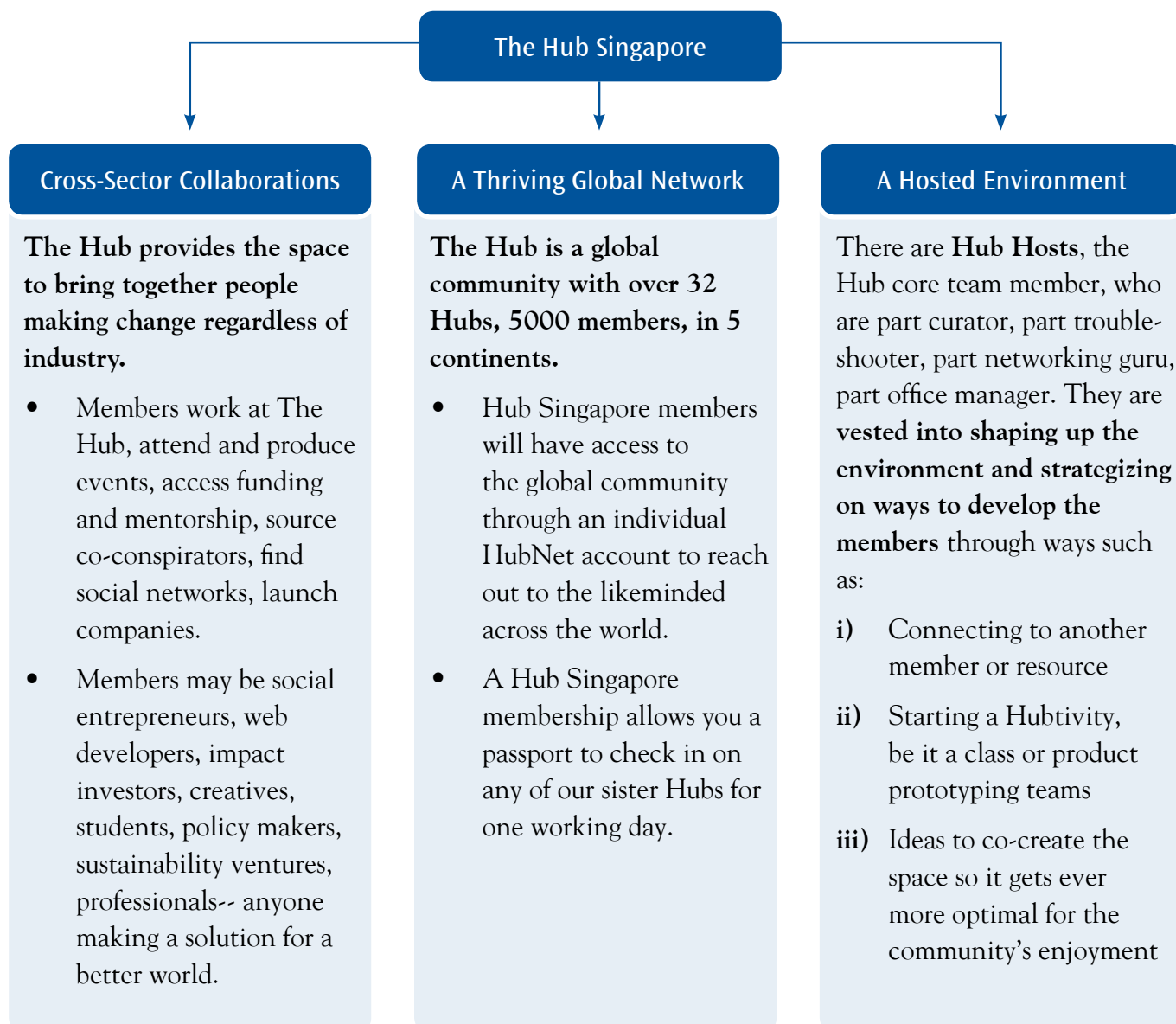
The increase in volunteerism converging on increased youth voice is demonstrated by an increasing trend amongst young Singaporeans to start their own volunteerism or social innovation initiatives rather than volunteer with traditional YSOs or Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). In order to ensure sustainability of their initiatives and programmes, these youth-initiated start-ups and social enterprises (YSEs) have approached national agencies such as NYC to provide seed-funding for prototyping and in scaling up their outreach. They have also expressed a need for good incubator hubs that would provide the necessary infrastructure, ready access to communities of practitioners and social innovators who will provide mentoring or entrepreneurial advice for their ground-up initiatives.

NYC's Partnership with the Hub Singapore

NYC, through its training and development arm, the NYC Academy (NYCA), works closely with The Hub Singapore to support these YSEs. Under the care of The Hub Singapore, YSEs can obtain the support and access to infrastructure that will help them scale up their social innovations and community initiatives.

Guided by The Hub Singapore's three-fold principle of cross-sector collaborations, a thriving global network, and a hosted environment, like-minded entrepreneurs, youth social entrepreneurs and sector leaders can get connected with mentors, access to funding from social investors, curated co-work spaces, social impact events and workshops, learning opportunities and a collaborative platform.

¹ <http://www.nvpc.org.sg/knowledge/researchpublications.aspx>



Achievements of the Hub Singapore

To date, there are 68 registered youth entrepreneurs and youth leaders (16 to 35 years old) within the community. They represent a diverse mix of backgrounds, organisations and sectors. Annex A shows a breakdown of the Hubbers profile.

The Hub Singapore has organised over 100 curated events since its launch and had over 2000 event attendees, including 90% who are Singaporeans and permanent residents. During this period, they have also gained a membership of over 100 Hubbers and incubated an environment for partnerships that have supported local social enterprises.

Since the establishment of the partnership, The Hub Singapore has also provided support to 20 youth-initiated project proposals through collaborative solutioning, mentoring resource, and matchmaking with social investors. Beneficiaries of the partnership include local social enterprises such as Gone Adventurin² and PlayMoolah³.

² <http://www.goneadventurin.com/>

³ <http://www.playmoolah.com/>

The Hub further supports the community through its three Hub Fellowship Programmes, which aims to identify outstanding entrepreneurs who believe strongly in a cause and nurture them to run entrepreneurial ventures that create sustainable impact. These fellowship programmes are:

i) Hub Youth Fellowships

The Hub Youth Fellowships is aimed to promote purpose-driven entrepreneurship to the young, The Hub believes that positive social and environmental change can be done at any age. However, passion alone is not enough to make a considerable impact. Business acumen, leadership, teamwork, the skills to gather resources, sell a vision, networks and mentors are equally important. The fellowship targets students and university graduates who have a cause they care about and have an idea that could impact that.

ii) Social Entrepreneurship as a Career

The Hub believes that one doesn't have to choose between a meaningful career and financial sufficiency. Many have successfully married purpose and profit. It comes with new models of thinking, of doing and of validating success and social entrepreneurship is one such way. This programmes targets working professionals who are looking for more meaning in their career. Some are already putting in more than 18 hours a week to build up their idea, while some are quitting their jobs to pursue the social entrepreneurship route full time.

iii) Fellowships for Ecosystem Builders

The programme aims to connect, support and celebrate ecosystem builders. The Hub believes that change comes from the bottom-up, as much as it does, top-down. In a field as nascent as the entrepreneurship scene in Singapore, nodes of networks, community shapers and ecosystem builders are key in growing the field. The programme also sources and supports community nodes of networks out there that are running events and activities that serve to grow communities, build markets and inspire to collaborate.

Key Recommendations

From this experience, NYC Singapore has made the following observations that can guide successful outcomes for young people:

1. *Build on collaborative partnerships with NGOs / YSOs* in order to strengthen ground engagement. This will leverage on diverse expertise, promote cross-sectoral convergence, and provide greater flexibility for youths to design and implement their ground-up initiatives.
2. *Provide greater access to infrastructure support and community of practitioners* which can support the co-creation and implementation of sustainable community initiatives through mentoring and access to more diverse sources of seed funding or social investors.
3. *Leverage on Commonwealth and CYP networks* in strengthening regional collaborations and networks with communities of social innovators and investors.
4. *Leverage on CYP programmes and initiatives* that build capability for youth sector organisations and civil society organisations in promoting youth social innovation and enterprise.

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Dominica Youth Business Trust, Dominica

Youth Development Division, Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sports Government of Dominica

Executive Summary



The Dominica Youth Business Trust (DYBT) is an initiative of the Commonwealth Youth Programme Caribbean Centre (CYPCC) and the Government of Dominica. The programme combines attributes of several past initiatives and involves inputs from several institutions and donors into a coordinated project that delivers an efficient package of services to young entrepreneurs.

The first national consultation for the establishment of the initiative was held in August 2003 where stakeholders of various sectors explored the initial concept of the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative (CYCI), with the aim of developing a youth credit model which is best suited for Dominica.

The Dominica Youth Business Trust emerged after many consultations and strategic sessions aimed at developing a product that was best suited to needs of young people of Dominica, and which could be effectively managed and sustained over time as a national effort. It was officially launched in May 2004 by Youth Affairs Minister, Honorable Vince Henderson. The Trust targets young men and women aged 18-35 years who are desirous of starting or developing a micro or small business.

The Dominica Youth Business Trust recognizes that young people's involvement in the small business sector is critical for the development and growth of the national economy. Hence the role of the Trust is to continue empowering this resource by improving the efficiency of the facility accorded to the youth.

Why?

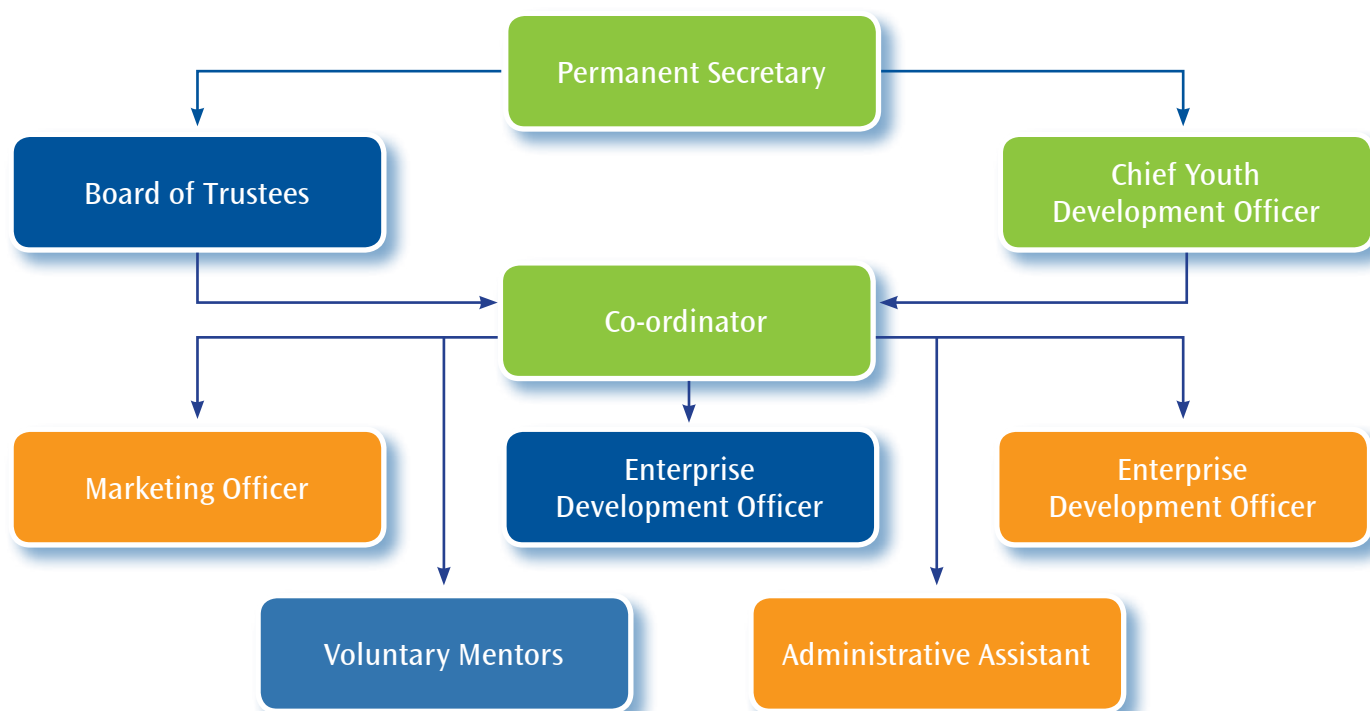
The downturn of the economy brought on by the loss of preferential market access, the decline in agricultural production, and international economic trends, were contributing factors which seriously reduced the amount of resources available for allocation to youth empowerment initiatives. The situation was exacerbated in 2002 when the government of Dominica was forced to go to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and embarked on stabilization measures which adversely affected the economic empowerment of young people. For these reasons, the intervention of the Commonwealth Youth Programme with the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative (CYCI) was timely.

Our mission and drive

DYBT's mandate is encapsulated in its mission statement which is

“To empower Dominican youth in realizing their entrepreneurial potential by facilitating access to financial, technical and social assistance geared towards the development of viable businesses, thereby contributing to the growth and development of the national economy.”

DYBT Organogram



- Proposed positions
- Government employed

DYBT's goals are to:

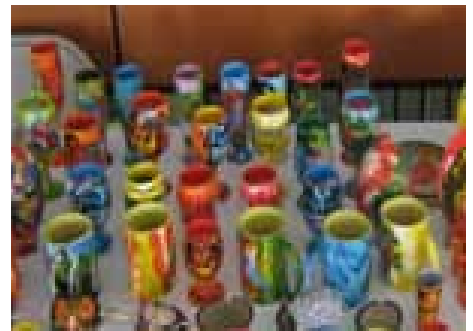
- Develop a successful programme for the facilitation of youth business in Dominica.
- Implement a successful programme that fosters cooperation among the public sector, the private sector and the donor community.
- Assist in the increase of the number of young people going into business and enhance their entrepreneurial abilities through quality service and support.

The focus of the Dominica Youth Business Trust is three-fold:

1. **Business Training:** Training young people in micro and small business development to include business management, record keeping, marketing, financial management and personal development.
2. **Loan Guarantee Facility:** Facilitating access to credit through a loan guarantee fund whereby entrepreneurs under the programme are provided collateral/security and in some cases grant funding for their businesses. Currently DYBT provides 100% security of maximum XCD 20,000.00 (USD 7,361.00) and grant funding under the Business Plan Innovation Awards (BPIA) of XCD 10,000.00 (USD3, 681.00) among the top six innovative businesses annually.
3. **Business Mentorship:** The Trust has an excellent relationship with the private sector and resource persons for the provision of effective mentorship services to young entrepreneurs on a voluntary basis.

Our main stakeholders

The Dominica Youth Business Trust targets young Dominicans between the ages of 18 to 35 years old who lack access to funding to establish and operate a small business. Strategic partners of DYBT include the youth, Commonwealth Youth Programme, Government of Dominica, Financial Institutions, the Dominica State College, Youth Business International Network, Caribbean Development Bank, Organization of American States, First Caribbean International Bank, and the Dominica Agricultural Industrial and Development Bank.



Milestones



DYBT was first conceptualized at a Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting (CYMM) in 1992. The First national consultation on the Dominica initiative was held in August 2003. The initiative was launched in May 2004. In 2010 DYBT became the official host of Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) for Dominica. In 2011 DYBT became an accredited member of the Youth Business International, and that same year was awarded by CYP as a Best Practice in the Commonwealth. In March 2012 DYBT captured a GEW Champion Catalyzer Award in Liverpool,

from among 123 countries globally, and in December 2012 captured the Team Award at the Dominica Public Service Awards.

Essence of partnership

The Dominica Youth Business Trust is administered by a Board of Trustees, consisting of nine Trustees appointed by the Youth Minister to serve on a two-year term. Representatives to serve as Trustees are nominated by the following Organizations/Institutions:

- Youth Development Division
- National Youth Council
- Small Business Support Unit
- Dominica State College
- Financial Institutions
- Private Sector
- Non-Governmental Organizations.

DYBT is funded by the Government of Dominica, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Organization of American States, the Caribbean Development Bank, the First Caribbean International Bank, and the DAID Bank. The Loan Guarantee Fund is administered through formal partnerships with twelve local financial institutions with customized loan packages to accommodate the youth.



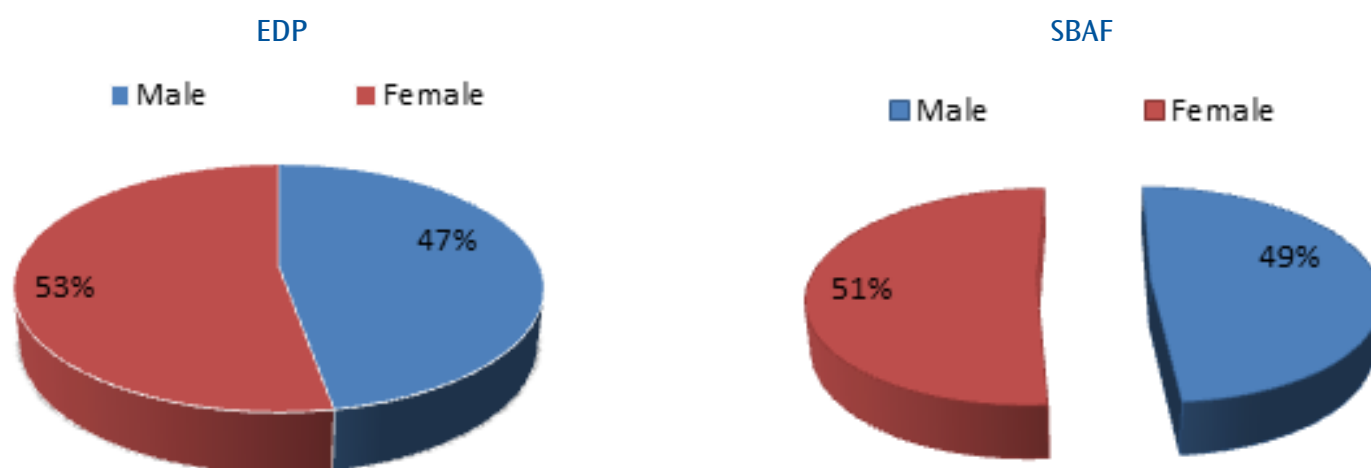
DYBT Data at a Glance

Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP)	Small Business Assistance Facility (SBAF)
<p>197 people trained in EDP - 93 males, 104 females</p> <p>72 EDP entrepreneurs in business = 36.5%</p> <p>60 EDP Loans - 27 males, 33 females</p> <p>Current EDP Loan Portfolio = EC\$471,069.18</p> <p>Current EDP Loan Guarantee = EC\$365,339.96</p> <p>EDP Loan Access Rate = 30%</p> <p>Loan Approval Rate = 60/107 = 56%;</p> <p>EDP Delinquency Rate = 13.5%</p> <p>Loan Balance = EC\$289,129.35</p>	<p>192 people trained under SBAF - 97 males, 95 females</p> <p>101 SBAF entrepreneurs in business = 59%</p> <p>37 SBAF Loans - 20 males, 17 females</p> <p>Current SBAF Loan Portfolio = EC\$694,911.58</p> <p>Current SBAF Loan Guarantee = EC\$603,039.11</p> <p>Loan Approval Rate = 37/85 = 44%;</p> <p>SBAF Delinquency Rate = 6.69%;</p> <p>Loan Balance = EC\$570,559.77</p>
Portfolio Performance- EDP & SBA Facilities	
<p>Employment generated = 229</p> <p>Current loans = 62</p> <p>Consolidated delinquency rate by interest = 1.54%</p> <p>Consolidated delinquency rate by principal = 7.46%</p> <p>Total delinquency rate = 9.00%</p> <p>Total loan portfolio as of July 2012 = \$1,164,980.76</p> <p>Total guarantee as of July 2012 = \$968,379.07</p> <p>Total loan balance = \$859,689.12</p> <p>Total paid by DYBT for written off loans as of July 2012 = \$134,551.36</p> <p>Total grants to Entrepreneurs from CYPCC – BPIA = \$63,371.40</p> <p>Total grants to Entrepreneurs from AID Bank – BPIA = \$10,000.00</p> <p>Total grants from DYBT for Entrepreneurship Awareness Programme (EAP) = \$1,000.00</p>	

As of February 2013, 197 young entrepreneurs (93 men and 104 women) have benefited from the Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP). 60 of these entrepreneurs have accessed the loan facility.

DYBT also caters for young people within the same age group who are already involved in small business and need to expand their operations. This target group is catered for, under the Small Business Assistance Facility (SBAF). As of February 2013, 192 entrepreneurs (97 males & 95 females) have benefited under this facility. 50 entrepreneurs have accessed loan under this facility.

Gender distribution in DYBT services (EDP and SBAF)



In October 2008, DYBT's mentorship programme was launched with technical support from the Barbados Youth Business Trust and financial support from the Caribbean Development Bank. DYBT has trained over 50 mentors, and about 25 entrepreneurs have been receiving technical and moral support from mentors.

The Dominica Youth Business Trust in collaboration with the Commonwealth Youth Programme Caribbean Centre (CYPCC) and the Dominica Agricultural Industrial and Development Bank (DAIDB) administers a Business Plan Innovation Award (BPIA) for outstanding business ideas in well-presented business plans by the youth.

DYBT Income and Expenditure to date

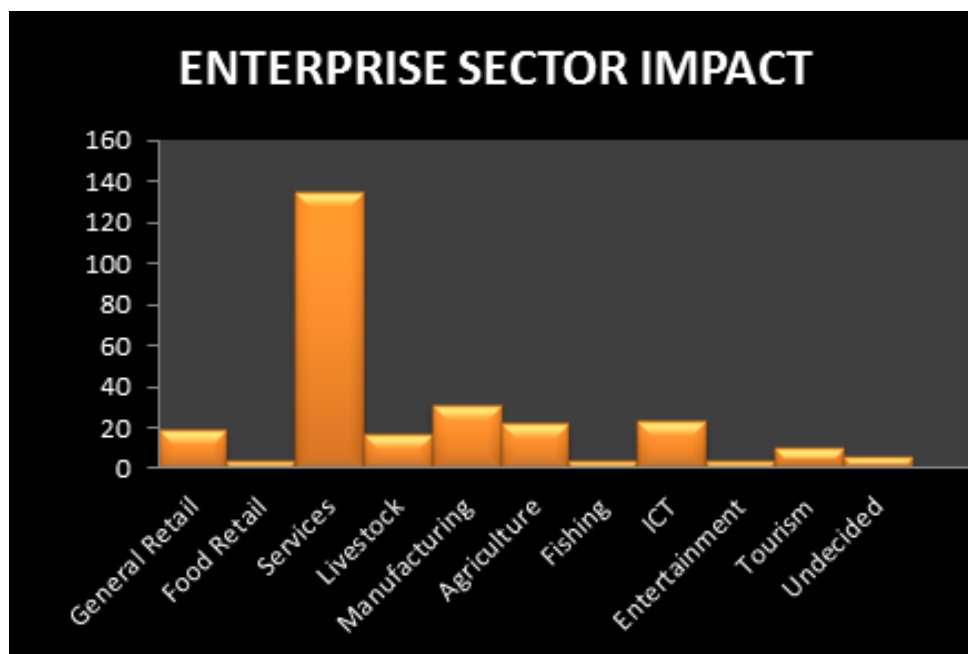
Training Expenditure		Contributions to Business	
	Amount ECD		Amount ECD
Government of Dominica	152,375.30	Government of Dominica	1,100,000.00
CYP Caribbean	106,738.19	CYP Caribbean	256,079.80
Organization of American States (OAS)	62,919.00	Organization of American States (OAS)	265,410.00
Agricultural Investment Bank (AID) Bank, Dominica	13,000.00	Agricultural Investment Bank (AID) Bank, Dominica	23,000.00
FirstCaribbean International Bank	72,799.29	FirstCaribbean International Bank	121,459.66
USAID	18,787.40	USAID	
Total DYBT expenditure to date	426,610.18	Total contributions to DYBT to date	1,765,949.40

Conclusion

DYBT is a nine-year old initiative which was established for the young people of Dominica and was designed in consultation with the youth and other key stakeholders. DYBT is being implemented in the Commonwealth of Dominica, and the Coordinator has worked with the CYP Caribbean Centre to replicate some of the good practices in Trinidad, Bahamas, St. Lucia and Guyana.

The key lessons to be learned from such a successful model can be summed up in one word, 'APPROACH'. The approach includes five key elements;

- a. The initiative was driven by a need at a critical stage of the country's development;
- b. There was consensus for such an intervention from all major parties;
- c. The direction of the initiative was endorsed through a consultative approach involving all key stakeholders;
- d. The involvement of the beneficiaries has been maintained throughout the decision making process; and
- e. The recruitment of well trained and purpose driven personnel to manage the initiative from inception.



The main accomplishment of this success story over the nine years is the creation of an entrepreneurial culture among Dominican youth which seemed non-existent prior to DYBT. Another major achievement is the dismissal of the notion that the youth are not bankable, and the realization among the financial institution that with proper guidance, mentoring and an enabling environment, youth entrepreneurship is critical for the economic growth of the financial sector and the country by extension.

The DYBT model is one to be replicated particularly in developing countries.

More information on the DYBT is available by emailing tccentre@cwdom.dm

Self-Management Clinics for Empowering Youth, Papua New Guinea

Introduction

The National Youth Commission and the Ministry of Youth, Religion and Community Development of the Government of Papua New Guinea have identified the self-management clinic as an innovative model and effective tool for youth empowerment to affect positive behaviour and empower change in young people. The clinic was designed by Dr Michael Unage, Principal Consultant of the Gapromas Problem Management Services.

Problem statement

Young people in Papua New Guinea (PNG) are often labelled as a “problem” in society. This conclusion is widespread because youths are found in crime spots, they are most known for substance abuse, have accrued the most liabilities on family, lack of direction and purpose, are viewed as generally unproductive and an increasing burden on others. Young people are more vulnerable and at risk to many challenges that is facing society today. Lack of proper up-bring, poor family support and structures, joblessness, poor education are problems youth face. Faced with these problems, some young people lose hope, have very low or no self-esteem and no life plans or life goals. A usual escape for them is to indulge in drug and alcohol and turn against society by engaging in criminal activities.

The solution

A clinical training was designed using the self-management approach in trying to assist young people to change their mindsets as a means of tackling negative attitude and behaviour. The self-management clinic was designed by Dr Michael Unage, a principal consultant with Gapromas Problem Management Services. This clinic was tested three times: in November 2007, in January 2009, and most recently in January 2013. It demonstrated that most of the participants had a complete change of mindset, and have abandoned their former negative behaviour, and are committed to becoming agents of change in the community. Some have chosen career paths and are currently involved in income generating activity.

In Our Own Words 1: Participant Feedback from the 1st Self-management Clinic, November 2007

“For me to participate in self-management clinic is a real privilege because I found the answers to all my problems in life. I felt relieved and real satisfaction deep within me. I honestly feel that I am totally a new person. I see that everything in life is possible for me and I have the innate powers to do anything under the sun. I realize that self-management is the KEY to everything in life and the solution to every problem whether big or small. I recommend the workshop to everyone in PNG because I see a big need for people, both high and low in status, to achieve self-management.”

Participant, Self-Management Workshop, Mingende, 2007

The Rational for Self-Management Clinic

The self-management clinic tries to deal with the human “machines” by asking those involved to do a thorough introspection (looking at oneself). Unlike other therapies and counseling methods, where people are preoccupied with symptoms in order to arrive at the causes of a problem, the self-management approach does a complete service check of the human psychosomatic composition. To do that, knowledge, skills and techniques are required.

The approach taken in self-management clinic is quite simple. It deals with the inner faculties and processes of human beings, and when properly directed, they can serve as an antidote to personal behavior conflicts. The irony is that one can manage people, public funds, organizations and systems; nevertheless, if one cannot manage oneself, effort in managing other entities will be a wasted expenditure. Indeed, the self-management option should be regarded as the basis on which other management systems and approaches can be grounded.

The Processes in Self-Management

The self-management clinic designed is first of all deeply rooted in personal experiences and with an earnest desire to seek solutions. Second, appropriate knowledge and techniques in the field of psychology were employed; namely logotherapy, psychoanalysis, and psychosynthesis. Thus, the knowledge and techniques used in self-management is the blending and configuration of these specialized areas in psychology. A brief explanation of the process is given below.

1. Logotherapy

The process of going within ourselves, and to access the immense power we possess, and to make sense of them all is technically termed the “myotic process”. Thus, the subject field is called logotherapy. The person who discovered this field of knowledge is Victor Franklin. He developed the idea of proactivity meaning the ability to act from within rather than from any external compulsion. His own dreaded experience in the Nazi concentration camp helped in formulating this. The myotic process in self-management helps us to enter within us to discover the hidden psychic energies that are either latent or idle in us. No matter what people say we are, only by going within us do we come to know ourselves better and can approve or disapprove what others say about us. In fact the inner space is as immense as the outer space, thus the space for improvement within has immense potential. To draw immense power from within is a possibility not often explored by many people, and this is exactly what the self-management approach tries to deal with.

2. Psychoanalysis

We need to know what is involved in self-knowledge. Thus, the way of self-discovery is the most appropriate manner of entering within. The subject field is called psychoanalysis and the expert is Sigmund Freud. The important idea about psychoanalysis is to dig into our past buried experiences and to see if they have any bearing on our recent attitudes and behaviors. The psychoanalytic process helps us to discover in more detail the different parts that we are composed of, especially concentrating on our lower unconscious region. Many of the psychological techniques employed in self-management option are developed toward enhancing this process of self-discovery.

3. Psychosynthesis

Psychosynthesis, while helping us to know our differing parts, furthermore shows how those parts are interconnected and form a completely new entity. In technical term, it is called the “synergic process”. Thus integrity and synthesis are words that can be used to describe the same process. The process looks at people in their totally and not partially. The expert in the field of psychosynthesis is Roberto Assagioli. The synergic process is both used as a process and the end in achieving self-management. By working toward balance and synthesis in our personality, we gain self-management; and this in turn will give meaning and purpose for what we are and what we want to be.

Dr Michael Unage

The Participants and Stakeholders

The first clinical trial (2007) was conducted in the Simbu province of Papua New Guinea to a group of young people, mainly composed of hard core marijuana addicts. The second clinic (2009) was conducted and attended by a group of students who needed to focus on their studies due to some behaviour problems. The clinic was requested by the Community Development Agency (CDA), a non-government organisation, and sponsored by the Law and Justice Sector Secretariat and the Oxfam New Zealand Highland program respectively.

The third clinic (2013) in Goroka was funded by the National Youth Commission and supported by the Ministry for Religion, Youth and Community Development. The participants in the clinic were from the Morobe, a province in Papua New Guinea. So far 60 young people have undergone this special clinic, and more will attend in the near future. Each clinic lasts for 10 days and takes a total of only 30 participants, which is the maximum recommended number for it to be effective.

Training Contents

In self-management clinic, all sessions, exercises, and discussions try to help those involved to enter these three processes. The main topics of self-management process are as follows: Firstly, self-management clinic deals with the three processes followed by topics regarding determinism, autonomy, freedom and responsibility. Whist other sessions deals with the techniques for cleansing psychological junk and recognizing inner dynamics and psychic energies and how to access them. Following from that, are topics dealing with the destructive forces of eros, discovering sub-personalities and working with sub-personalities. The significant area has to do with a self-identification process followed by sessions on empowering the human will and mind.

Moreover, proactive versus reactive paradigms are contrasted as well as lessons provided on motivational adjustments. Following from that, are tips regarding personality redesigning and prospective planning. The final session is a ritual dedication of consciousness. Each session has one or several accompanying psychological drills to evoke and enhance the development of those human faculties and functions.

Continued overleaf

In the self-management clinic there are 16 presentations, 10 routine drills, 10 short psychological exercises, 10 long therapeutic sessions with chances for group dynamics and dream analysis. Self-management clinic is a process and not content knowledge dissemination. As such self-management cannot be conducted alone but always in conjunction with a problem issue, such as drug and alcohol abuse, workplace inefficiency, students' learning impairment, degradation of women and other problem issues of law and order. The self-management clinic while incorporating particular problem content usually lasts 10 days.

Dr Michael Unage

The Impact

In 2007, 22 young people, most of them drug addicts, attended the clinic. Monitoring reports show that 70% of them stopped taking drugs and are now well respected in their community. The basic thrust of the clinic was to effect mindset change. In 2009, 70% of the youth who left school due to behaviour problems have re-enrolled and have found meaningful employment. They have now become assets rather than liabilities in their communities. Participants will be monitored over the coming years to determine the life-long change resulting from this clinical intervention.

Positive Outcomes of Self-Management Clinic

The self-management clinic was subjected to two trials: first to a group of drug addicts, and second to a group of students and youths. The first one attempted to release dependents from the addiction to drugs, especially marijuana, and second to empower and effect behaviour change among students. The first self-management clinic was conducted at Mingende in the Simbu Province. The workshop was on Drug and Alcohol organized by the Community Development Agency, an NGO group with support from the Law and Justice Sector. While the Director of Drug and Alcohol was disseminating the content knowledge on alcohol and drug, I took the opportunity to test the self-management approach to solving drug and alcohol addiction. At the end of the workshop in November, 2007, I asked for an evaluation report of the self-management approach and was quite thrilled at how the approach seemed to have an instant shift in mindset for those participants, few of whom were regarded as hardcore addicts of marijuana.

However, relying on workshop outcomes was never a true reflection of real change, so I expected a report back in three months on the changes that occurred at home. The report is one of over 22 examples of the many changes that took place among participants. This statement is from a student from Aiyura National High School, who went on to do engineering at University of Technology in Lae, who attended the first self-management clinic:

“One very bad thing about myself is that I am a shy guy and don't have confidence in myself. At school, I always feel shy and try to hide myself from others. I don't know why but that habit was already building inside me. I don't walk on footpath, instead, move around the back of classroom when shifting from class to class, because I am very nervous and feel very shy to walk in front of girls and other students.”

At church too, I don't take part in activities but just sitting on the chair listening to what is shared. Sometimes we normally practice songs to present it to the audience at the church, but when the time for presentation comes, I always give excuses because I don't have confidence.

When I attended self-management workshop at the Pastoral Centre (Mingende), it's a different story now. Going back home, I thought about the things I have learnt about determinisms, sub-personality work, empowerment of will and mind, and confidence starts building up. From there I started to put it into practice by walking in the public places like market with short beach wear, where I never did before. Whenever challenges come, I always think about building the will power which I learned.

Finally one big challenge that came across my life was the public awareness on drug and alcohol. I was nervous but I know that's the only chance to build my confidence so I just did it. The first public speech was very challenging but after that the rest seemed as though I have done it a hundred times before. Now I am a very confident guy who can stand in front of big crowd and feel very confident in myself that I can do the impossible”.

Dr Michael Unage

Future prospects

The clinic is a new initiative but has been proven to offer real solutions to the problems faced by young people. The clinics have demonstrable positive impact because changes are visible and are being sustained by the participants. The clinic will be conducted with more groups, and with the support of the National Youth Commission (NYC) of Papua New Guinea, it will be extended throughout the country.

The recent clinic held in Goroka was witnessed by the Minister for Youth, Religion and Community Development, Hon. Loujaya Toni, and the Commissioner for Youth, Mr. Norit Luio. Impressed with the immediate effect of the clinic on participants, they pledged their full support for sustaining the clinic.

In Our Own Words 2: Participant Feedback from the 2nd Self-management Clinic, January, 2009, Mingende

“When I was born up until now, I don’t even know about myself, and even some other good things I have been taught. Attending the training on self-management here at Mingende, I got very important knowledge about myself from the introduction session to its conclusion. Within this week, I thought I was born again. After the training, I will become somebody in future, because I knew who I am now.”

Morua Mau

“As a result of this self-management training, it helped me a lot. I really like it. I learn many interesting things which I don’t know before. I will go back home, and I will totally change my life and my behaviour. I would like to say thank you. I really appreciate your teaching.”

Micklun Michael

“As for me, a big challenge is at my back to remove all the psychic junks that I have carried in my past life. I believe, I am going for my personal self as a student this year and come out with good grades. I am very happy with the training because it’s a boost to my self-understanding and knowledge of my inner self, and to control my feelings and desires. I am very happy.”

Terence Dulume

“The self-management training has changed some parts of my life, because every day I learn a lot of new things to help me change. I hope it will greatly assist my future life so I cannot live a useless life. I must not let all my sub-personalities control me because they are not me. I must control them.”

Alwin Graham

“It is mostly surprising during the self-management training. Since I was born to this world, I think life used to be like that, but it is not. Surprisingly, it’s the other way. The changes I experience in this training are the body, feeling, desire, mind exercises.”

Benson Kumulgo

“Many changes have occurred. I have changed from being somebody to being myself today. This training has given me a great challenge, and has showed me some of the battles that I have fought for over a decade. Now I see life so different from last week. There are two words I like and they are Focus and Will. I know that from now on I will achieve my dreams by using focus and will power.”

Robert Gari

More positive impacts

Many similar experiences of the participants are available for interested readers. The second story is from a self-employed young man in the Gumine District:

“Right after the self-management workshop in Mingende Pastoral Centre, I went home. The very next day onwards, I read over and over the handouts on self-management training and then got my marker and on an A4 paper wrote three words in bold print and pinned it on the wall of my house. These three words are Freedom, Autonomy and Responsibility. Being a citizen of a democratic country,

I have the freedom to decide what I want and desire; nobody enslaves me as in communist countries. I have the autonomy to say yes or no to any outside influence. Having realized that being a Christian, I should know the universal law of love and to take the responsibility to help others and contribute to society and the world. The Wright Brothers took the risk to invent plane and today it takes me an hour to travel from here to Port Moresby. What can I invent to contribute to the next generation?

Freedom and autonomy without responsibility is a selfish attitude, thus today many rich people are selfish whereby no revolution occur in terms of remedy in our society. We are still in the environment of chronic cycle from the outside influences. After meditating on these three key words including the important notes in the handouts, I have made a new start in my personal life. Today, my windup business has been recovered gradually. The newly formed Mian Community Cooperation Kirapim Hauslain sought for my help so I assisted them. My house is there for meeting and office space, and I, as their secretary, do administration job like writing meeting minutes and drafting constitution prior to opening bank account and applying for registration. I too recently founded another organization called Gumine Coffee Cooperative for the whole Mian people.

Four years ago when I was in Madang the local singers asked me to write songs for them and two years ago being a care-taker pastor of Four Square Church, my short sermons usually inspired congregation. By then, for some times I lived in an environment of confusion without proper dream in my life. Now after the self-management workshop, I began to realize my potential within me. I am thinking of going back to my pastoral work in the near future. So in the meantime I am on my way to my number 6 new songs that I wrote and compose with my old guitar.”

However, the training in self-management was done to empower young people from within so they can avoid the abuse of drug and alcohol in their lives. Nonetheless, from the many feedbacks received from the participants, the training did affect and influence other aspects of their behavior and character as well.

Therefore, a statement by Allan Richardson, an experiential psychologist, was right about self-management approach. He said human adults are constructed to develop a self-management option that can be used to override some aspects of the automatic system. A powerful self-management system available to people has not been explored by psychologist, and little is known about the most effective use of such an option. Trails on this little known effective use of self-management were conducted in the two clinics. They had a 70% success rate over a period of 3-5 years and continuing.

Dr Michael Unage

Conclusion

There is no great difference between people in Papua New Guinea and the rest of the world, and this is also true for young people. A change of mind-set is for good for anyone who wants to bring about a positive change in her/his life and circumstances. The self-management clinic is a novel, powerful and innovative approach to changing lives of young people. Though the training was implemented in PNG, it has a potential to be replicated anywhere in the Commonwealth countries. The clinic is generally about changing the mind-set of human beings in order to find purpose and fulfilment in life and should be embraced in empowering young people for positive growth and development.

In Our Own Words 3: Participant Feedback from the 3rd Self-management clinic, January 2013, Kefamo

“As for me, I am very happy to attend this training. My life has been changed for the past few days. I began to discover myself and identify my weaknesses. I also identify the power that lies within me. I see that this training needs to be conducted in schools that will help and grow the next generation of this nation.”

Mike Nema Daniel

“I learnt a lot of things which I never learnt in school. I experienced a new mission in life. I am putting my thinking cap on and I am ready to face the circumstances with that power in me. I finally understand who I am and what are my roles and responsibilities in life. I am very happy to have this opportunity of learning who really I am as the true human being on earth.”

Melisha Adi

“As for me, this training of empowerment and leadership, I really come to understand and know my true self. This training has shown me a direction to do things and how to control my behaviours and attitudes in a proper or right way and not to rush things. Now I can do or follow my own direction instead of following other people or friends, other ideas or plans. Now I can see I can control my desires, feelings and mind.”

Howard J

“For the 10 days empowerment training, I would like to thank God that this training makes me really change some of my personal characters and also it helps me to understand who I am. So as for this training, it makes big change in my life and I hope what I learn from Dr. Michael Unage will help me for my tomorrow living and also the skills that I learn will help me to develop myself for the better future.”

Shirley Bell

“The first day at training was hard for me to cope up, but as the second day comes, I started to fill something inside me needs to be exposed and dealt with. As the third and so on after class, I would go to my room and started asking myself questions that the man outside cannot answer. I could see small changes on the third day but personally I wasn't satisfied with myself. As we go deeper, it was like looking at myself in the mirror or standing under a x-ray scanner which shows the inner being exposed so clearly. As I started to realize the real me, the joy in me just keeps telling me that it's all about evaluating yourself and seeing the real you. Leadership is not about changing others; it's about changing yourself starting from the inside to the outside, than others can change through growing influence or by your character and behaviour.”

Wesley Deso

For further information on the Self-Management Clinic, please contact the PNG Commissioner for Youth, Mr. Norit Luio

Next Generation, The Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth

Executive Summary

The Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth (RASC) encourages the interchange and development of sustainable agriculture, forestry, fishing and the rural environment throughout the Commonwealth, working with and through its member societies.

Main Body

Background

The Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth (RASC) is a confederation of over 50 leading national and regional Agricultural Show Societies, Agricultural Associations and Research bodies working in 20 Commonwealth countries.

Founded in 1957 by Patron HRH The Duke of Edinburgh KG KT and 12 international Agricultural Show societies, the initial aim was to promote the work of Agricultural Show Societies by providing a network / forum for discussion of latest ideas and experiences.

The RASC is the Commonwealth Civil Society representing Agriculture. Today the society has widened its horizons and through its Member Societies promotes the development of both Show Societies and best practice farming, improving the incomes and the production of food in Commonwealth countries. The RASC is the voice of agriculture in the Commonwealth and continues to work closely with the Commonwealth Secretariat and its associated bodies.

The RASC Next Generation

The RASC Next Generation is a group of young delegates selected to attend the RASC Biennial Commonwealth Agricultural Conference. During the conference the RASC co-ordinates a separate Next Generation (NG) forum where future leaders of the Commonwealth Agricultural Societies meet together, learn and discuss related issues. The Next Generation delegates attend all other conference sessions and are invited to participate in the pre and post conference tours. The youth selected to be part of the RASC Next Generation Forum are chosen by RASC Member Societies as those who are showing the greatest potential to contribute to the long term face of Agriculture in their regions, countries and around the Commonwealth. The RASC sees it is vital for tomorrow's agriculture leaders to host a networking opportunity with their counterparts from other Commonwealth countries, forming long lasting contacts and friendships. The knowledge and ideas amongst the Next Generation Group is put to good use discussing matters and making recommendations to the RASC and its member societies on a range of issues.

The RASC identified at the Next Generation forum in Calgary in 2006, that there was an opportunity as well as enthusiasm for collaboration amongst young Commonwealth agriculturalists to visit a developing Commonwealth country. This is how the Biennial Next Generation Understanding and Assistance Missions were formed. The first Mission was held in Zambia 2007, followed by a second Mission to Papua New Guinea 2009 and then in 2011 the third Mission to Singapore and India. Planning for the fourth Mission is currently underway and is going to take place in Malawi later this year.



The objectives of these Missions include the exchange of ideas and best practices between those involved in agriculture and agricultural societies and extension work organizations in developing Commonwealth countries.

Objectives will include:

- To provide extension work in developing countries through hands on assistance with local farmers.
- To provide guidance and support to RASC Developing Country Member Societies in the staging of an Agricultural Show.
- To strengthen links between young people in building Networks for future assistance and cooperation.
- To encourage increased Respect and Understanding amongst young Commonwealth agriculturalists who will become our future leaders.
- To provide a learning opportunity for sponsored NG delegates which will enable them to share and contribute their knowledge in the host country in which the mission is held, furthermore have the opportunity to grow their agricultural perspective to create a positive impact once returning home.

In countries where there is a very low literacy rate, particularly amongst rural communities there is great worth in providing agricultural advice of a very basic nature, the most basic of principles can be enormously beneficial to many commonwealth agriculturalists in developing countries, basic principles can usually also be demonstrated in a practical manner that is easy to understand. The participation in the Mission by NG delegates from developing countries is vital in transferring knowledge between countries where agricultural practices and techniques may be of a similar nature. It is also beneficial for the farmers visited to interact with young farmers from both developed and developing countries. The effectiveness of the group is increased by having contributors from diverse backgrounds and areas of expertise.

All NG delegates are asked to prepare a summary report to raise awareness about the impacts created during the Missions which are made available to all participants, organizations involved and local/national media members. There are many examples of effective and beneficial press coverage that took place as a result of the previous three NG Missions.

The NG's also have the opportunity to debrief and collectively come up with follow-up activities which are of interest to the Commonwealth Foundation, RASC Member Societies, diplomatic links and the Commonwealth Secretariat on the diversity of agricultural sustainability within the Commonwealth. A full report of the Mission will be given during a plenary session during the RASC Commonwealth Agricultural Conferences in the presence of President HRH Princess Royal.

During Next Generation Forum at the Biennial RASC Commonwealth Agricultural Conference provides an excellent opportunity for reporting the outcomes and ongoing results over successive years. A continued involvement in the forum by representatives from developing Commonwealth countries will allow the RASC and its youth group to monitor the effectiveness of the activities undertaken and to provide further assistance where necessary.

Conclusion

The next RASC conference will take place in 2014 in Brisbane, Australia and the next Understanding and Assistance meeting will take in summer 2013. The RASC NG hopes to reach as many young enthusiastic people in Agriculture across the Commonwealth as possible, sharing learning's and best practice. The society is always looking for new people and member to get involved. To find out more information please visit the RASC website www.commagshow.org

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NG Mission Book Links
www.blurb.com/b/1166387-rasc-2nd-next-generation-mission
www.blurb.com/b/3471544-rasc-3rd-next-generation-mission

National Youth Health Strategy, Maldives

Executive Summary

Maldives is a developing country where 1 in every 4 people belongs to the youth population. Maldivian youth are faced with variety of health issues and challenges, hence, it was identified that achieving better health for the young people of the Maldives will be possible through the active participation of all the key stakeholders. A collaborative multi sector approach is required to provide youth health services to achieve holistic health services for the youth. Keeping this in mind, the Ministry of Human Resources Youth and Sports, with the assistance of UNFPA developed a document called the “National Youth Health Strategy” (2011-2015) in 2009.

Youth and Health

Young people are the future of every nation and developing a healthy youth population is the best long term investment. Youth is an age group of rapid growth and development as they move from childhood to adulthood. This period of change brings many challenges in all aspects of health which need to be addressed to develop a healthy youth population. Health issues impacting young people range from improper nutrition, inadequate exercise, unsafe environment and unhealthy relationships, to risky behaviours such as smoking, illicit drug use, and unhealthy sexual activities. Violence is also becoming a major issue which is spreading amongst the youth. Hence, designing and implementing strategies to tackle these issues are vital to improve the health and wellbeing of youth and is therefore youth a key area for the development of any country.

Most of the surveys and studies conducted in Maldives have considered youth as age between 15-24 (The Global Fund Maldives, 2008; Ministry of Health and Family, 2010). This has also been observed for the purposes of this project. Studies showed that Maldivian youth have inadequate health awareness and were exposed to risky health behaviours. The youth health strategy has been developed to be used as a guide to implement programs and interventions so as to improve their health and well-being.

Purpose of the Strategy

The aim of the National Youth Health Strategy is to promote and maintain complete physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual health and well-being of the Maldivian youth to improve their quality of life. The target group for this National Youth Health Strategy is the youth population of the Maldives including the mainstream, vulnerable and high risk youth as well as youth with high health needs and disability. The overall purpose of this National Youth Health Strategy is to facilitate stakeholders and service providers to coordinate and implement a comprehensive youth health program to achieve optimum health of the youth.

The policy design approach

The development of the youth health strategy involved identifying national youth health issues, problems, concerns and strategies identified from an extensive literature review, individual interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). Individual surveys and focus group discussions were held among youth groups from different backgrounds, representing the islands which make up the Maldives. Youth groups included vulnerable youths such as illicit drug users, recovered illicit drug users, youth from street gangs, students from higher educational institutes (both government and private sector), students undertaking short term skill based training, youth volunteers, members from youth health centres, school

leavers, unemployed young people as well as employed young people and both unmarried and married sexually active youths.

Additionally, FGDs were held among stakeholders. Representatives from both government and private organizations, national and international organizations, mass media, members from health and education sector, tertiary level hospitals, private health clinics, school teachers/supervisors, health assistants, representativeness from Islamic ministry, penitentiary and Maldives Police and Defense force participated.

Health issues and best practice strategies focusing on young people were identified through an extensive literature review of studies and data from Maldives and other countries. After analysing interviews and FGD findings and with findings from literature review, the 5 main youth health strategic directions were formulated. Similarly, these findings and suggestions were incorporated to draw up the activity areas for each strategic direction. As adolescents are an important age group to focus on in preventing some anti-social behaviour or conflict amongst young people as well as achieving optimum holistic health in young people, activities targeted at adolescents have also been included.

Implementation

Implementation of the strategic action plan will be guided by implementing principles drawn from the aim, purpose and goal of the strategic action plan. The roles of all main local and international stakeholders in the Strategy have mapped out Action Plans along with the outcomes which are to be achieved for young people in the Maldives. This will enable better networking and sharing of resources to achieve agreed outcomes in the future.

Conclusion

A Youth Health Strategy is a platform to address the health issues among the youth population and to create awareness and action for the health and wellbeing of the young people as an investment in national development. Recent world efforts have been focusing more on the health of young people, and the numbers of young people who are contracting communicable and non-communicable (life style) diseases. The experience of the Maldives can be useful to other Commonwealth countries wishing to embark on national health strategies.

National Summer Camp Programme, Barbados

The National Summer Camp Programme (NSCP) represents the programme of the Government of Barbados to provide through enlightened universal social policy provisions, a developmental programme of care and protection that caters to the needs of approximately 12,500 children in the 4 -15 age cohort.

The programme through its wide ranging curriculum caters to personal development needs while meeting national imperatives. The programme must be considered not only as a model for best practice as it meets minimum standards requirements for monitoring and evaluation, but also because it is consistent with the protection of the rights embodied in the **Convention of the Rights of the Child**.

Background

The contemporary changes in social conditions as a result of urbanization and industrialization have contributed to the breakdown of many of the traditional family and neighborhood settings creating a worrisome problematic for working parents who must ensure that their children are adequately supervised to reduce misadventure and the risk factors for juvenile delinquency that tend to increase during the summer vacation. The National Summer Camp Programme (NSCP) therefore has emerged as a solution for parents and guardians by providing a focused six week intervention at sixty nine venues across the island that provides structure and security and reduces the amount of unsupervised free time that children have.

The NSCP plays an important role in the social development of campers through a creative and innovative curriculum that prepares them for the ultimate roles of leadership and citizenship as pointed out in the **National Youth Policy 2011**:

Henceforth, holiday camps will be further used to provide learning experiences for children and young people in those disciplines which have been earmarked for creating the new Barbados economy. Holiday camps will therefore specialize in giving young people opportunities to acquire life skills and technological skills, as well as to provide greater exposure to business enterprise, sports, the visual arts, the performing arts, the culinary arts, with emphasis on music, literature drama, dance, film and agriculture. (NYP 2011, p 54-55)

Although historically, summer camps have been a part of the Barbadian landscape, there has been a significant paradigm shift in relation to the number and role in relation to national development objectives. This shift was enunciated by the Government of Barbados in 2008, which espoused a policy that it was necessary for a progressive nation to nurture and protect its youth in order to build a society grounded in wholesome values. It was therefore the role of a responsible Government to provide not only the infrastructure but also to examine what children did in their vacation, where they spent time and with whom.

Programme Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that if campers are kept in a safe and nurturing environment and exposed to a systematic development programme that consists of a range of structured psycho-educational and experiential services then their social functioning would be improved and they can develop positive values, attitudes and life-skills that would assist them in demonstrating pro-social behaviour.

Programme Inputs

The wide ranging curriculum and schedule of activities for NSCP are reflective in the imperatives for national development articulated in The National Youth Policy of Barbados 2011.

Some of the short term measurable outputs pieces in cultural arts, digital media among others developed through facilitators in the camp environment which were forwarded for judging in the National Independence Festival of Creative Arts (NIFCA) and Dance-Fest.

NSCP Evaluation

The evaluation essentially established a scientific methodology to assess the operations of the NSCP and make recommendations to improve the planning, monitoring, effectiveness, and efficiency. Primary data were collected from a sample of various stakeholders and secondary data from reports submitted to the Camp Secretariat. These data measured three broad questions in relation to policy formulation, policy execution and accountability in public decision making:

1. Was the NSCP 2012 designed to meet the needs of the campers, the principal beneficiaries of this service?
2. Was the NSCP 2012 implemented in the most technical and efficient manner?
3. Should the NSCP be continued, modified, or terminated?

Overall, it was evident that the NSCP 2012 in spite of some implementation deficiencies achieved its aim of delivering within a safe and caring camp environment, a consistent and sustained academic, behavioural and experiential programme geared towards creating a process of cognitive, behavioural and attitudinal change in campers while developing the life-skills that would enhance personal and social development.

This success however cannot be measured at a snap-shot but via a longitudinal study examining whether there has been a sustained change in the lives of young people. Indeed, the data have shown that the NSCP is an emerging social development programme, pregnant with possibilities for transformation but which is still very much in an embryonic stage in terms of its growth process and as an intervention that is bringing meaningful change in the lives of campers.

The second area of major success is noted in the growth trend of the NSCP. Table 1 shows the comparative breakdown from 2007 to present.

Table 1: Comparative Figures for the camp programme from 2007 – 2013

	2007/08	2008/09	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013
No. of Camps	33	40	62	67	69
No. of campers	3486	3000	9238	10,435	12,500
No. of Directors	33	40	62	67	69
No. of Assistant Directors	33	40	65	67	69
No. Camp Assistants	-	363	818	825	850
No. of Caterers	-	-	65	72	67

The data reflected a significant increase in the numbers of camps over the comparative period and a commensurate increase in camp personnel. This points to the Government's continued investment in the NSCP. There is no doubt however that in the current economic recession that the financial burden on Government is a significant. Consequently, the question of a public/private enterprise becomes critical. Partnership will ensure that the private sector and community organizations become stakeholders with Government to execute the NSCP as a means of demonstrating social responsibility and as an investment in citizenship.

Summary

The data from the evaluation is pellucid and suggest that there is a correlation between the objectives of the NSCP and the personal and development needs of campers, parents and other wider stakeholders. Secondly, the model of the NSCP based on size, scope and potential for meeting wider social developmental goals of citizenship and the creation of a cadre of youth leaders is unprecedented.

The NSCP therefore provides a model which can be emulated across the region as our young people benefit from a systematic programme of coaching, mentorship and personal development in a community atmosphere that is safe and caring. The model is therefore preventative rather than reactive and supports a philosophy that resources in young people should be invested at the front end rather than at the back end, if the costs of social breakdown are to be avoided and young people afforded the kind of programmes that result in wholesome development

Applying the New Science of Positive Psychology to Create Flourishing Students, Staff and School Communities, Australia

Romi Kaufman, Psychologist, positive psychology and youth mental health consultant

Executive Summary

This paper provides an introduction to the field of 'positive education' and demonstrates how applied positive psychology training and consultancy is informing and assisting schools to develop and maintain optimal functioning of students, staff and whole-school communities. Applied positive psychology has been shown to reduce mental health concerns in young people, while enhancing resilience, creativity, performance and engagement of both staff and students. It responds to calls for a new education paradigm in the 21st century, one that promotes the development of the "whole person".

What is the need that is being addressed?

"The broad overarching purposes of a twenty-first century curriculum should be to strengthen civil society and participative democracy, to promote individual development and social cohesion, to develop economic prosperity and environmental sustainability and to prepare students for active global citizenship."

The Curriculum Standing Committee of National Professional Associations (2007)

Schools today face unprecedented challenges. They are called on to create human success at levels never before achieved, to the extent that doing more of the same, even more efficiently and effectively, will not meet the challenge. As we rely on the youth of today to respond to the multi-faceted challenges of our future, schools today are required to foster a generation of youth who are resilient and able to generate change on personal, social, national and global levels (Waters, 2011).

While schools have traditionally looked at academic achievement for evidence of their success, today's students need more than intellectual resources to achieve acceptance, respect and success (Yeager, Fisher & Shearon, 2011). Today's students need a holistic approach to development, one that also takes a proactive approach to mental health and guides wellbeing by developing the resources of optimism, resilience, creativity, motivation and relational skills.

At the same time, today's teachers need support to remain motivated and inspired, and to gain meaning from their work. Only when teachers flourish can students flourish too.

What is the evidence that showed such a need?

Calls for a new paradigm of education, one that takes a broader approach to student development by focusing proactively on wellbeing as well as academic achievement, have largely stemmed from rising statistics on mental ill-health in children and adolescents.

"It is increasingly accepted that if students are to reach their full potential, schools cannot merely teach traditional subjects with a bit of PSHE, sport and culture thrown in.

They need to do much more to develop in their children resilience, powers of self restraint and the habits of optimistic thinking. Allied to this new thinking has been a far more systemic approach to the teaching of mental and physical wellbeing, with schools realising that they shoulder a major responsibility for developing wholeness in each child."

Dr. Anthony Seddon Headmaster, Wellington College, UK

A national randomised survey investigating the mental health of 4,500 Australian youth (aged 4 – 17) found 14% had mental health concerns (Sawyer et. al., 2000). A more recent study assessing the wellbeing of Australian teenagers attending a non-government youth development organisation, found 28.3% of participants (aged 13 – 18) presented with depression (Kaufman & Pallant, 2006). In 2010, the ABS revealed 26% of young Australians experience mental illness (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010).

“If we really want to build a strong platform for healthy development and effective learning... we must pay as much attention to children’s emotional wellbeing and social capacities as we do to their cognitive abilities and academic skills.”

National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2006)

While this rising prevalence is cause for concern, higher still is the number of adolescents who, in the absence of mental illness, are still not flourishing (functioning well in life; Keyes, 2005). The absence of serious behavioural, psychological, and emotional problems in adolescents does not necessarily equate with thriving (Benson & Scales, 2009). A study of 600 Australians aged 10 - 14, found 46% of respondents experienced a lack of self-confidence, 54% were anxious about not fitting in, and 40% felt they were under-performing (Tucci, Mitchell & Goddard, 2007).

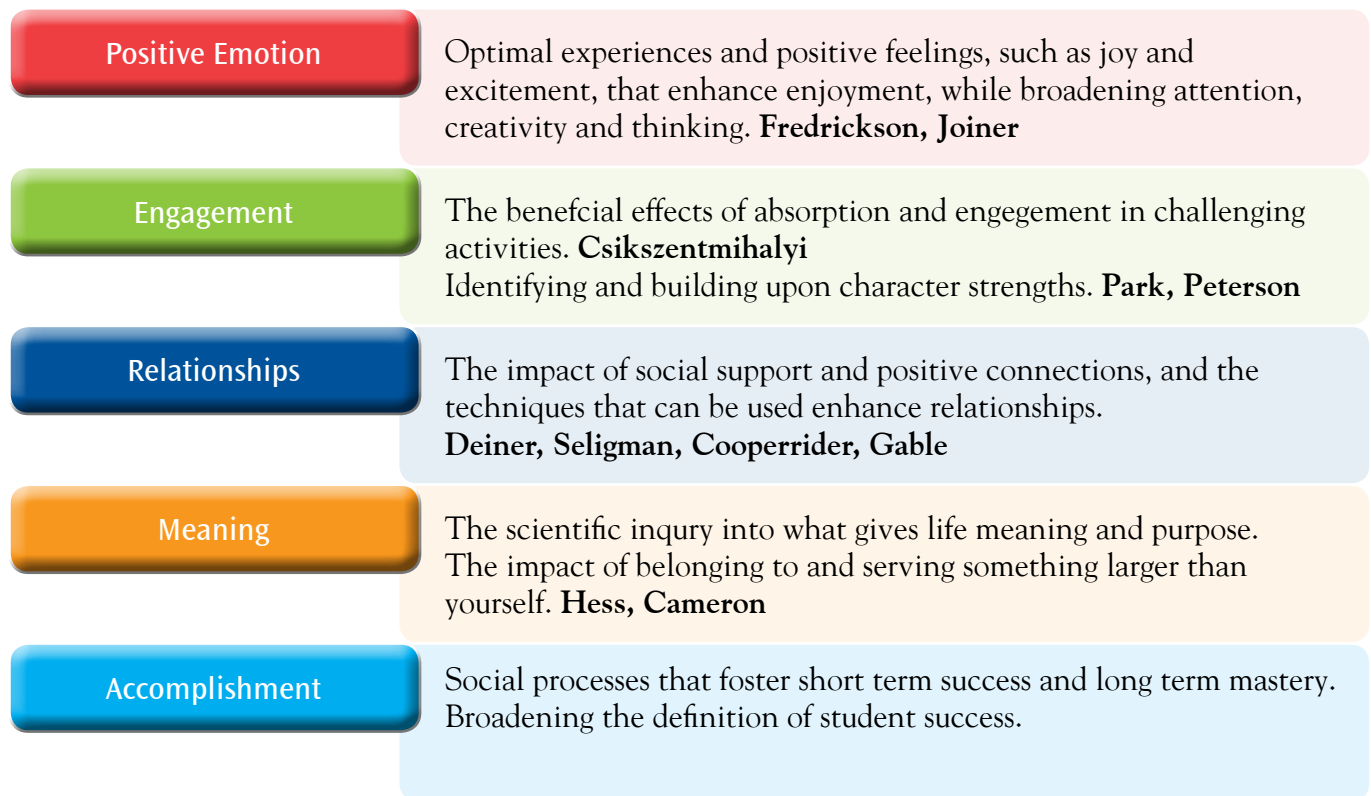
What was the solution that was developed?

In response to these challenges, schools have benefited from what positive psychology has discovered about resilience, strengths and the creation of meaningful relationships (Yeager, Fisher & Shearon, 2011).

Positive psychology (PP) is the umbrella term for the scientific study of optimal functioning and what makes life worth living (Gable & Haidt, 2005; Noble & McGrath, 2008). Led by the work of Martin Seligman, researchers over the past two decades have discovered some of the fundamental processes and patterns of thinking, feeling and relating that facilitate human success; the factors that help individuals, communities and organisations to thrive by building on their strengths and virtues. They have further developed specific techniques and interventions that can help us better understand and adopt these patterns of thought, feeling and behaviour (Gable & Haidt, 2005; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000.) ‘Positive Education’ is the application of PP into the function and work of schools. The goal is to create flourishing students, staff and institutions.

The *Positive Psychology Professional Development and Consultancy Program for Educators and Youth Professionals* (PPPDC), created and facilitated by Australian psychologist Romi Kaufman, is a multi-layered project involving a range of workshops and support options designed to introduce to school staff, and ultimately students, the new science and key concepts of PP as they relate to education. The program commences with teacher training modules designed around Seligman’s PERMA model (2011) of wellbeing (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: PERMA model of Wellbeing (Seligman, 2011)



Schools choose between one-off professional development workshops or on-going interactive and experiential modules and consulting options that cover the application of PP at the organisational level and the classroom level, enabling them to integrate PP principles into the school curriculum and ethos (see Figure 2). All modules are underpinned by rigorous academic theory. The result is a powerful method of supporting teachers and students in their work, enriching relationships and interactions, enhancing student and teacher enjoyment of school and education, and helping students to become healthy, resilient and efficacious adults.

Figure 2: *Positive Psychology Professional Development & Consultancy for Educators and Youth Professionals* – outline of three of the core training modules

Core
Module
1

Introduction to Positive Psychology and Positive Education (2 hours)

A stand-alone professional development workshop or the first module in a comprehensive training program.

This workshop introduces participants to the main tenets of positive psychology as they relate to education and youth development. Participants discover for themselves their negativity bias and how this impacts on their personal and professional lives and the development of their students. They learn about the prevalence of mental health issues at school; how positive psychology supplements traditional psychology (thriving versus surviving); the need for positive leadership in schools and a holistic approach to student development; and what research reveals about happiness and approaches to wellbeing (PERMA). Lastly, through a series of evidence based activities, they experience the impact of positive emotion on creativity, attention, engagement and performance, as explained by Barbara Fredrickson's Broaden and Build theory.

Core
Module
2

The Value of Identifying and Using Character Strengths in the School Environment (2 hours)

Workshop two focuses on generating awareness of personal character strengths and the value of identifying and using strengths in the school environment. Strengths can be defined as natural capacities for behaving, thinking or feeling in a way that allows optimal functioning & performance. 'Signature strengths' refer to the top five character strengths and virtues of a particular individual, which can be easily identified using the 'VIA survey for character strengths'. When people use their character strengths they feel a sense of authenticity and ownership; they feel energised and are likely to experience intrinsic motivation leading to a rapid learning curve. Through a mix of theory and experiential activities, participants learn about the impact of using character strengths on school success. They are taken through a process of identifying and reflecting upon their own strengths, and come to recognise the value of identifying and playing to the strengths of their colleagues and their students and the impact that this has on student and teacher wellbeing, engagement, performance and interactions.

Core
Module
3

Positive Communication and Interaction (2 hours)

Workshop three focuses on the critical importance of relationships. Participants are introduced to research on high quality connections, their impact, and how to create them at school through respectful engagement, effective task-enabling and the creation of trust amongst and between students, staff and parents. They discover the difference between the typical problem solving approach and Appreciative Inquiry - a method of asking questions and envisioning the future to foster positive relationships and build on the present potential of a given person, organisation or institution. Through interactive experiential activities, they practice the skill of appreciative questioning, the art of active-constructive responding and reflect on the impact that differing communication styles have on their schools.

In each module, participants are provided with tangible tools that can be used immediately in the classroom, the staffroom and beyond, and that can be built upon over time. Learnings can be used to create a stand alone wellbeing subject for students, or they may be incorporated directly into the current school curriculum or school philosophy. Schools may request further consultation from the workshop creator to assist with this process.

What is particularly innovative about it?

Although schools and youth organisations have long provided mental health services, the predominant approach is reactive. Psychology services are traditionally available only after students demonstrate difficulties (Ewan & Green, 2010). The PPPD Program takes a proactive approach, focusing on promoting competence and strengths, as well as prevention and treatment of problems. It provides a framework to adopt a holistic approach that addresses the needs of the whole child.

Who are the key participants and stakeholders involved?

Knowledge and support of PP by school leaders is critical to achieve the greatest outcomes, and it is vital that teachers first experience the benefits themselves in order to impart and model the principles to students. Whole-school approaches are encouraged, where all staff members are trained in positive education so that PP tenets may be supported throughout the entire organisation.

How does it have an impact?

PP interventions have been shown to mitigate many youth mental health concerns by decreasing depressive symptoms and increasing general wellbeing. Raising wellbeing is synergistic with better learning, higher academic achievement, heightened creativity, productivity and willingness to contribute to broader societal purposes. Learning wellbeing skills is associated with

“Teachers are important people – they save lives. Schools are important places – they are where children experience a community dedicated to learning in its broadest sense. A single good teacher who cares and who shows they care, who is passionate about children, about learning and about life, can inspire a child and have an influence beyond their own lifespan.”

Jenny Fox-Eades, Centre for Applied Positive Psychology, UK

longer-term positive effects on career success, job satisfaction and income, as well as the cultivation of empathy, altruism and prosocial behaviours (see Appendix A). This research brings hope to students who may not have the traditional academic abilities typically promoted at schools as a way to achieve success.

Who is involved? How many young people are directly and indirectly impacted? Where is it implemented? What is the timeline of the initiative?

In 2012, all staff at *Swinburne Senior Secondary College* (Melbourne, Australia) participated in the PPPD program. Additionally, all Principals, Assistant Principals and Leading teachers from all schools in the DEECD (Australian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development) Southern Melbourne Education region received PPPD training, with a potential impact on 12,757 students (see Table 1 overleaf). Twenty-two of these schools have expressed interest in pursuing full staff training within their individual institutions. It envisaged that customised individual school training modules will be scheduled throughout 2013 - 2015.

Youth workers at *Melbourne CityMission, Western Region Accommodation Program*, which offers short-term crisis accommodation for young people (in excess of 70 per annum), received PPPD consultation in 2012.

Might the initiative be replicable in other Commonwealth countries? How that might be achieved?

The PPPD training modules for Educators and Youth Professionals include facilitated workshops with clearly laid out program outlines, presentation slides, hand-outs and lists of required materials. They are therefore easily replicable and adaptable by others who have sound knowledge of positive psychology, or those who would be interested in receiving training and guidance from the program creator. Through consultation, modules may be adapted in accordance with varying cultural requirements across the countries of the Commonwealth.

Conclusion

Key learning's and recommendations

New education paradigm has been called for in the 21st century, one that looks beyond academic success to develop the 'whole person' via opportunities for social, cultural, emotional and intellectual development. The Positive Psychology Professional Development and Consultancy Program for Educators and Youth Professionals provides a framework and language for schools to address this call, focusing on optimal wellbeing and performance of students, teachers and the broader school community. To date, research supports the success of positive education in mitigating mental health problems and enhancing wellbeing, achievement, engagement, attention, creativity and long-term success. It is recommended that a growing number of schools and youth organisations across the Commonwealth create positive education programs that strategically support and sustain a positive climate for whole school wellbeing.

TESTIMONIAL: "The workshop provided many ideas to embed aspects into current instruction. Provided a lot of information, but was never too heavy. Provided triggers for thinking and application."
P. Seddon, Assistant Principal, Malvern Valley Primary School, Australia

Case Studies on Social Development

Table 1: Australian schools and youth organisations who participated in Positive Psychology Professional Development Training & Consultancy in 2012

School / Organisation Type	School Name	No. of participating staff/school leaders	Student Impact*
Primary Schools	Armadale Primary School	3	369
	East Bentleigh Primary School	3	270
	Bentleigh West Primary School	2	564
	Carnegie Primary School	2	432
	Caulfield Junior College	5	457
	Caulfield Primary School	2	122
	Caulfield South Primary School	2	490
	Coatesville Primary School	5	598
	Glenhuntly Primary School	1	188
	Lloyd Street Primary School	2	525
	Malvern Primary School	3	709
	Malvern Valley Primary School	2	170
	McKinnon Primary School	3	778
	Murrumbeena Primary School	3	598
	Ormond Primary School	2	389
	Ripponlea Primary School	2	281
	Stonnington Primary School	2	191
	Toorak Primary School	4	340
	Tucker Road Primary School	2	528
Valkstone Primary School	2	534	
Secondary Schools	Bentleigh Secondary College	8	862
	Glen Eira College	2	453
	McKinnon Secondary School	4	1,641
	Swinburne Senior Secondary College	41	467
Primary-Secondary Schools	Malvern Central School	3	555
Special Schools	Ketandra	1	55
	Southern Autistic School	3	160
Community/ Alternative Schools	Caulfield Park Community School	3	85
Education field Officers	Southern Melbourne Metropolitan Education Network	2	n/a
Youth Organisations	Melbourne CityMission, WRAP	10	70
TOTAL		153	12,827

* Figures are based on 2012 enrolments

TESTIMONIAL: "It's reassuring to know that [the VIA] strengths survey and other leadership feedback surveys offer similar results. Ties in nicely with 'Organisational Change for Principals' course and associated readings on leadership strengths and how to use these to bring about workplace change."

J Manallack, Principal, Toorak Primary School, Australia

TESTIMONIAL: "Energetic and interesting presentation...a really good session and one that I can use immediately back in the school."

M. Dow, Assistant Principal, Armadale Primary School, Australia

Further Information

Mental Health of Young People in Australia: Child and Adolescent component of the National Survey of mental health and wellbeing [http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/70da14f816cc7a8fca25728800104564/\\$file/young.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/70da14f816cc7a8fca25728800104564/$file/young.pdf)

Developing a twenty-first century school curriculum for all Australian students. A working paper prepared for the Curriculum Standing Committee of National Education Professional Associations http://www.acsa.edu.au/pages/images/CSCNEPA_paper_June087.pdf

Authentic Happiness: homepage of Dr. Martin Seligman, Director of the Positive Psychology Center, University of Pennsylvania. Provides access to the VIA survey for character strengths <http://www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu/Default.aspx>

About the creator of The Positive Psychology Professional Development and Consultancy Program for Educators and Youth Professionals <http://au.linkedin.com/pub/romi-kaufman/4/464/863>

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Appendix A: The impact of positive psychology on well-being, academic performance, learning, creativity and success

Positive psychology and wellbeing (an antidote to depression)

A meta-analysis by Sin and Lyubomirsky (2009) revealed that positive psychology interventions are related to significantly enhanced wellbeing and significantly decreased depressive symptoms. High school students who were instructed to keep a gratitude journal for a term were more optimistic about the future, had higher states of alertness, attentiveness, determination and energy, reported more positive attitudes toward school and more positive attitudes towards their families than students who did not keep gratitude journals. Similarly, a handful of studies conducted with youth suggest that the positive psychology constructs of meaning, goal fulfillment, humour and life satisfaction may play an important role in the determination of positive and negative emotions in young people (Gotesdam, Svebak & Jensen, 2008; Suldo & Huebner, 2004). Fincham (2000) reported that optimistic thinking styles predict better interpersonal interactions and relationships.

Positive psychology and academic performance, learning and creativity

In a sample of 397 adolescents, Howell (2009) found that adolescents categorised as flourishing reported higher academic performance than those categorised as moderately mentally healthy or languishing. In support of this, further research has shown that positive mood produces broader attention (Fredrickson, 1998; Bolte et al., 2003; Fredrickson & Braniogan, 2005; Rowe et al, 2007), increased creative thinking (Estrada et al., 1994), and more holistic thinking (Isen et. al., 1991; Kuhl, 2000). Neuropsychology research supports the contention that wellbeing enhances learning - when students feel good, their brains release dopamine, which enhances attention and improves memory.

Positive psychology and success

Optimistic thinking styles have been linked to greater achievement and success at school, work and in sports (Reivich, 1995; Schulman, 1995). Studies have shown that students enrolled in social and emotional learning programs rank 14 percentage points higher on achievement tests than students who do not participate in such programs. These effects have also been shown to extend long term. It has been discovered that happy teenagers go on to earn substantially more income 15 years later than less happy teenagers (Diener et al., 2002).

Restless Development Case Study: Building a Stronger Youth Sector, Nepal

This case study showcases an innovative arrangement between the Ministry of Youth and Sports in Nepal and **Restless Development** working in partnership with youth led youth focused organisations, and the Youth NGO Federation to implement programmes approved under the National Youth Policy. Restless Development is a youth-led development agency which places young people at the forefront of charitable development. Restless Development works full-time in several Commonwealth countries including India, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Executive Summary

The Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS) is the ministry which is responsible for youth affairs in Nepal, and was established in 2006. As a young Ministry, MoYS has little experience in implementing youth focused programmes and has not established clear strategies or structures that will achieve youth development objectives. **Restless Development** (RD) is a youth led development agency which has been in existence for several years, with proven expertise in young people's participation and development in many countries in Africa and Asia.

Restless Development entered into a partnership arrangement, leveraging its comparative advantage to support the MoYS in youth development programming. The MoYS Youth Partnership Programme commenced in 2010. It supported the implementation of the National Youth Policy of Nepal with a focus on four priority areas:

- Capacity strengthening for monitoring and evaluation
- Creating a model Youth Information Centre (YIC) in 5 regional centres
- Implementing the National Youth Policy
- Creating a national youth working group to work alongside MoYS for resource mobilisation, programme implementation and capacity building

Arising from the work initiated under this partnership more funds are now available to a greater number of youth-led NGOs with enhanced capacity across Nepal to implement youth programmes in communities and regions utilising a competitive small grants grant process.

Context for youth development in Nepal

According to the MoYS, young people between the ages of 16-40 account for 38.8 per cent of the total population of Nepal. Given that youth are the backbone of the nation from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives, national development planning should take youth into full account, and youth should be mainstreamed into all aspects of the national budget and the national development agenda.

The National Youth Policy was released in 2010 and outlined an ambitious and promising foundation for youth development. The MoYS is responsible for formulation, planning, implementation and monitoring of the National Youth Policy. However, the MoYS had little experience in implementing youth focused

programme with the exception of sports programmes, and no clear structure and objectives to support national youth development. It also suffered from an inability to attract and retain suitable staff, and consequently a staff high turn-over.

There were also concerns about the inadequacy of the budget allocated to the NYP for youth development. Only an estimated 0.0003 % of the total national budget was dedicated to youth development, with the majority of the MoYS budget going to sports. According to July 2012 reports, “each youth aged 16-40 gets around NPRs 6 per head” in the “current budget of the government of Nepal”⁴

The Ministry of Youth and Sport offers a **Youth Partnership Programme (YPP)**. This YPP provides funds through a competitive grant process for youth led NGOs, to implement youth programmes across Nepal in support of the National Youth Policy. The goal of YPP is to empower and equip young people by mobilising NGOs and establishing Youth Information Centres across regions of Nepal.

The relationship between the Government and NGOs delivering youth led products and services under this YPP was not always a smooth one. Moreover, Nepali youth, were not aware that a separate budget had been allocated to allow them to mobilise themselves for youth-led development initiatives. This budget froze at the end of each financial year.

MoYS/RD partnership arrangement

Recognising **Restless Development's** proven expertise in youth-led development, the MoYS and RD brokered a partnership in 2010 aimed at enhancing the capacity of the MoYS to implement and monitor the National Youth Policy. The main priorities included:

1. Building the capacity of the MoYS in strengthening its monitoring and evaluation system
2. Creating a model Youth Information Centre (YIC) in 5 regional centres
3. Supporting the implementation of the National Youth Policy
4. Creating a national youth working group to support the MoYS for resource mobilisation, programme implementation and capacity building

This arrangement involved multi-tiered partnerships through which the Government of Nepal could equip, engage, and empower young people in Nepal for their overall development. The usual partnership structure for Restless Development is:

- **National level:** with the relevant Ministries, Youth Alliances, and donors.
- **Local Level:** with NGOs who assist us in implementing our programmes.

We build the capacity of all partners through sharing skills, methodologies, programmes planning, development and implementation.

The creation of overall partnerships required strong advocacy for enhanced working relationships between the Government and the NGOs/development agencies. These are the agencies that deliver a diverse range of youth products and services under the YPP including conflict resolution, livelihoods, civic participation, health, and gender equality.

⁴ (http://myrepublica.com/portal/index.php/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=38037 Published July 16, 2012)

Strengthening the framework for youth-led development work

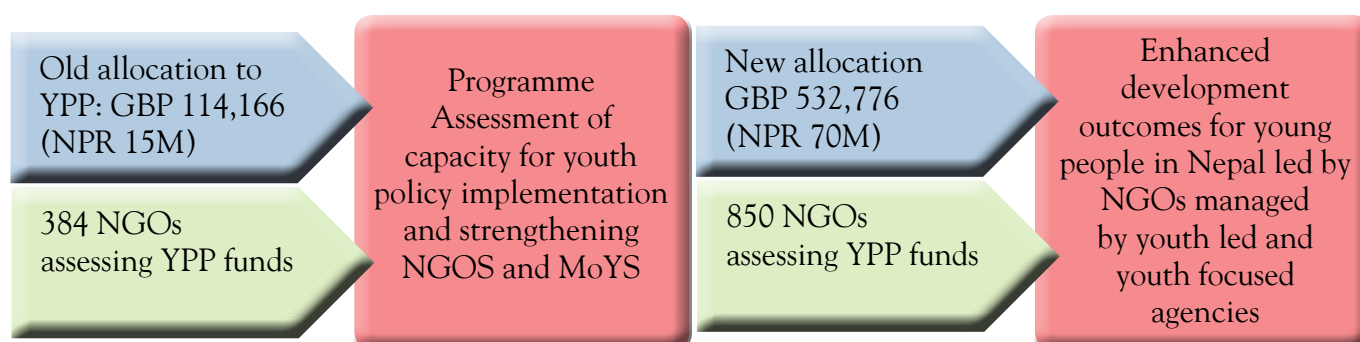
A first phase of the arrangement was a Programme Assessment (PA) of the NGOs supporting delivery of youth products and services in Nepal. The PA was managed by Restless Development with the Youth NGO Federation and the MoYS. This was the first programme assessment in the Youth Ministry conducted by an external independent organisation. A total of 135 people in 36 recipient organisations (staff, executive board members and other representatives) and 209 project beneficiaries were interviewed for the assessment. Sixteen youth assessors were selected and trained before conducting the programme assessment. The assessment was conducted according to pre-agreed standards with the MOYS. National Youth Federation Organization coordinated the programme assessment and Restless Development (Nepal) provided technical and financial support.

The overall objective of the PA was to assess recipient organisations' capacity to implement programmes concerning agriculture, public awareness on gender violence, youth empowerment, leadership development, conflict resolution, and control of trafficking in and sales of human beings. The programme assessment examined and analysed the following areas:

- Programme Management
- Monitoring
- Reporting
- Human Resource Management
- Organisation Management
- Financial Management

The recommendations of the PA were used by the MoYS in its strategy planning. This, coupled with regular lobbying saw the budget of the MoYS increase by 600 per cent above the previous allocation. (NRs 15 M to 70 M). Additionally, there was an increase by 244 per cent in the number of grants available to youth led/youth focused NGOs under the YPP from 348 NGOs to 850. **Young people now have more access to funding than before.**

Graph: *Impact of work of Restless Development in Nepal*



Key Learnings

Shaping Policies and Practices is an important aspect of our work. Historically, **Restless Development** was mostly focused on the direct delivery approach at local level, with small schemes and pilot projects. However, since we did not focus at a macro national level, we had no broader or trickle down effects wider effects.

There was a tremendous will to connect our expertise in ground / grassroots interventions to a national level approach and be a national player. This strategy worked well to propel RD from a local level player to a lead organisation and also allowed us:

- To have better leverage to work with wider networks and stakeholders;
- To contribute more effectively to our main goal- **to empower young people.**

The new **national level** strategic approach came into effect from 2010 onwards, when we started our engagement with policy-makers and decision-makers. While the manifestation of this new approach was our partnership with the MoYS, even before that time, **Restless Development** was advocating for the formation of a Ministry for youth affairs in Nepal.

The RD/MOYS partnership initiative has provided more impetus for promulgating a 'Youth Responsive Budget' for which youth focused organisations are advocating in Nepal. In addition, we recommend the following **key observations**:

1. Proper programme management is the key to delivering impact for beneficiaries
2. It is important to have a good relationship at all levels including the partners and the beneficiaries
3. It is significant for each partner to contribute to the programme in order to have a sense of ownership
4. Capacity building of young people is important for negotiating the demand

Lessons for other Commonwealth countries

Mindful of the recommendations above, this approach can be replicated in other Commonwealth countries too. It might be achieved by:

1. Research based advocacy
2. Regular lobbying with relevant government officials and capacity building of young people
3. Joint partnership with the line ministry
4. Need to build strong relationships with MOYS
5. Assess capacities and priorities of MOYS
6. A clear and measurable action agenda
7. Involvement and responsibility contract with other stakeholders

Further information

Please contact: Mr. Rudra Adhikari, *Director of Youth Programmes*, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Government of Nepal: email: rudrarp@hotmail.com

Mr. Mani Pokhrel, *General Secretary*, Youth NGO Federation, email: pokharelmani@gmail.com

A copy of the Programme Assessment Report is available upon request

EduFocal, Jamaica

A youth-led business service targeting youth in secondary schools



EduFocal

EduFocal is an online social learning tool for GSAT and CSEC students in Jamaica. The company was launched on March 15, 2012 and currently has over 600 students utilizing the service to practice for their exams. The services utilizes “gamification” to help to keep students interested in the service.

EduFocal⁵ as an online social learning platform was launched in Jamaica on March 15, 2012 at the Jamaica Pegasus.

EduFocal was created to enable social learning⁶, specifically test preparation. As of now EduFocal facilitates test preparation for students sitting the Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT) est in Jamaica and the Caribbean Examination Certificate exam (CSEC), but the platform was made to facilitate other exams, e.g SATs, CAPE etc. EduFocal has been endorsed by the Jamaican Minister of Education, The. Hon Ronald Thwaites, The Jamaican Minister of Science, Technology and Mining, The Hon. Phillip Paulwell and Junior Minister in the Ministry of Science, Technology and Minning, The Hon. Julian Robinson.

The Minister of Education is quoted as saying “Persons in the education industry are tired of the same conventional, ineffective methods of getting information across to students. EduFocal presents a refreshing method of incorporating learning with play.”

A core part of the EduFocal service is a concept called gamification. Gamification is the use of game-thinking and game mechanics in a non-game context in order to engage users and solve problems. EduFocal utilizes a few game mechanics, specifically the concept of “leveling up”.

Users who are registered to the EduFocal service start at level 1 in all the subjects that are offered, that is, the most basic level. To “level up”, users need to answer questions that are created by teachers on the EduFocal service; the more questions students answer correctly, the faster they level up.

The difficulty of questions is dependent on the level at which the student is: the higher the level, the more difficult are the questions. When students attain *level 65* in a particular subject they are considered “EduSparks” and have the ability to write questions/content for others on the EduFocal service.

Another element of the EduFocal service that is adopted from game mechanics is the leader board. The leader board is a system wide feature where students compete against each other for the number one spot on the service. The student who is consistently at #1 will win a scholarship from EduFocal.

As students level up, they have the ability to win small prizes as a means of encouragement and to keep them interested in the service

EduFocal was created out of a need to change the educational landscape in the Caribbean; a very modest goal. The most valuable part of the service isn’t the gamification, but the data that is collected on each and every student on the service. The company intends to use this data to generate reports on each student.

⁵ <http://www.edufocal.com>)

⁶ http://www.innovativelearning.com/teaching/social_learning.html

Figure 1: Screen capture of an EduFocal Member's profile page showing their current level in each subject



Figure 2: Example of a test page on EduFocal

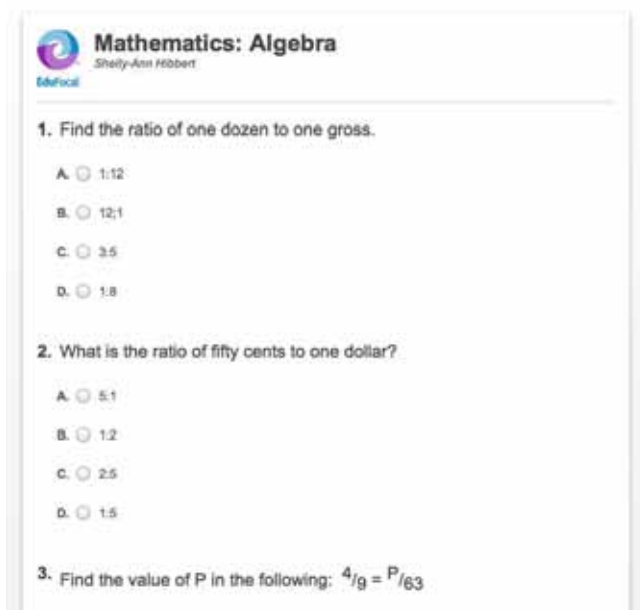
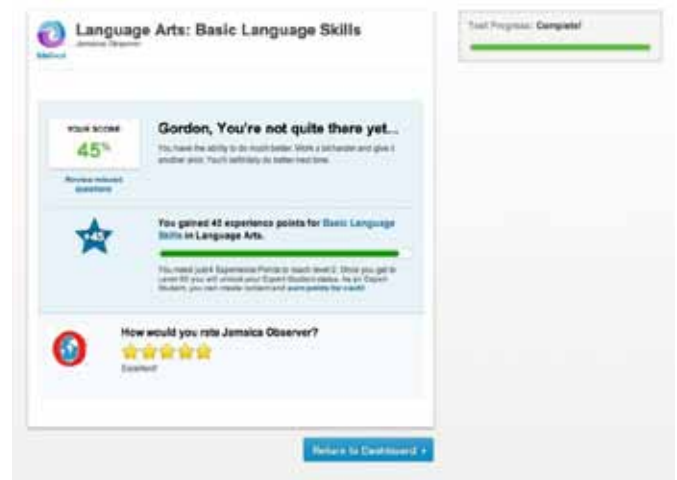


Figure 3: Test results page showing a student's score, the experience points accumulated etc.



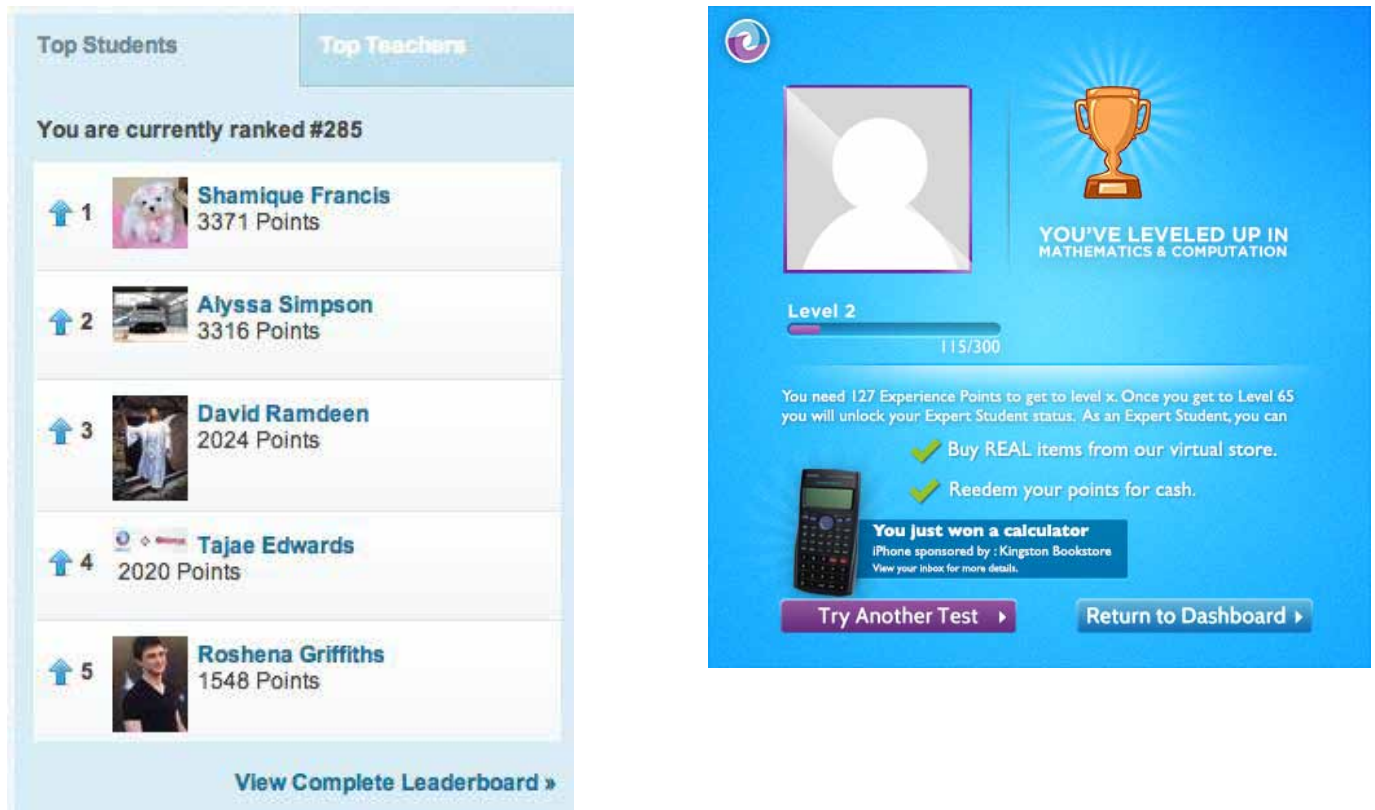
Finer statistics mean better usage of the teachers' time outside of EduFocal:

- Teachers can quickly discover problematic areas and
- Proficient students (on a given topic) can tutor others, among other things.

Dismal CSEC results⁷ are linked to many factors and leveraging technology in education can help. With so many elements competing for a child's attention, new and creative methods have to be used to hold a student's attention for any reasonable amount of time. Gamifying learning is one such method and is proving to be something that works well.

⁷ <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20120818/cleisure/cleisure1.html>

Figure 4: Screenshot of EduFocal's GSAT leader board



Students spend on average 16 minutes on EduFocal, which for students aged between 11 to 16 years old is a long time. Since December 2012, students have taken over 22,000 tests on EduFocal and parents have reported that students are on the service as early as 5:00 AM. One parent claimed that her child's performance in school has seen drastic improvement since she started using EduFocal.

The service was created by 22 year old entrepreneur, Gordon Swaby in August 2010. An experienced board of directors also backs him.

In December 2012, Swaby reached a deal with the Jamaica Observer Limited, one of the two major newspaper companies in Jamaica⁸. The partnership will see EduFocal expanding its content base to offer not only questions and answers for subjects, but reading content material from the Observer's popular Study Centre publication.

EduFocal is expected to impact thousands of students over the next 5 years by giving them an appreciation for learning, and not only to see it as a boring, rote thing that is done to get by in the world.

As mentioned earlier, EduFocal is a creative new platform, which will be further developed and is poised to change the way students learn not only in the Caribbean, but potentially the world. Governments and the private sector are encouraged to help to grow the service as its success is mutually beneficial.

EduFocal is also a one of its kind youth-led business service that has the potential to change the way young people in the Caribbean dream of and innovate business ideas to benefit themselves and their communities and countries.

For more information, please contact EduFocal founder Gordon Swaby at gordon@edufocal.com

⁸ http://m.jamaicaobserver.com/mobile/career/Fresh--exciting-GSAT--CSEC-study-method_13285276

BILD Youth Sports Leadership Programme Driving National Sport Policy Success, Tanzania

National Sports Council (NSC), Tanzania

Sports-based leadership training delivered by the National Sports Council (NSC) of Tanzania has created a sustainable and value for money model to up-skill young people across the country. By integrating the Beckwith International Leadership Development (BILD) training programme into local sports structures and aligning its objectives with Tanzania's strategy to develop grassroots community sport, young people are accessing quality training pathways and life enhancing skills.

The limited investment in sport development and recent reinstatement of sport and Physical Education (PE) in Tanzania has brought strong calls for the country to develop their own skills trainers and minimize the reliance on international trainers. Led by the NSC, an approach was pioneered to break down the barriers young people face to succeed in both education and sport. In partnership with UK Sport and Youth Sport Trust (YST), funded by the TOP Foundation, Tanzania and the UK have designed a programme that could answer the need to increase human capacity development through higher quality leadership training.

BILD has a methodology that uses sports-based training integrated into schools, sports clubs and community groups to enhance the competences of young people. It instills in them knowledge and skills that they can use in their everyday lives and that are desirable to future employers. BILD utilises existing sports structures and develops innovative thinking and practices through sports to deliver training that meets the social and economic needs of a country or region.

In Tanzania, under the management of Henry Lihaya, the Secretary General of the NSC, the BILD programme established four regional hubs, in regions selected by the Director of the Ministry of Information, Youth, Culture and Sport (MIYCS), Leonard Thadeo. Dar es Salaam, the headquarters for the NSC, Arusha, Songea (zonal sports offices) and Mayla Sports College became the centres for building trained leaders from the local community with the objective to increase the number of people participating in sport.

The compliance of notable sports organisations and key sports figures to absorb and drive BILD through their agendas is key to why BILD has succeeded in delivering the objectives set in the Policy for Sport. On a practical level, the absorption of the BILD programme into regional activities reduced the salary and overheads costs incurred by housing them within Tanzanian sports partners. The TOP Foundation's £250,000 support has trained over 8,000 teachers and 6,500 young leaders to deliver leadership training and directly impacted 55,000 young people participating in BILD activities. The trainers are now competent to deliver their own training, which has elevated the dependence on foreign skills or external human resource. The successful methods developed over a number of years by YST saw leaders attend 5-day training workshops, requiring participants to develop teamwork and basic movement skills and required limited sports equipment or facilities. The four hubs were successful in bringing together local schools, National Sports Associations, district organisations and NGOs - work that had not previously been undertaken.

The personal stories of BILD's success draws out the greater impact the programme has had on trainers and young people. Teachers like Lilian Ombima, a tutor at the Midland Teacher Training College in Arusha will continue to utilise these skills. She wrote: "BILD has removed my limited thinking of sports

equipment and facilities to teach young people a variety of life skills. I never trained as a PE teacher, but found myself as a sports teacher in school and therefore my thinking was always to have sports equipment and facilities to be able to play with the kids.”

It has also given young leaders like Mohammed Mvumbagu the opportunity to meet other youth driving the power of sport from around the world, as he was selected to travel to Switzerland to take part in the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) leadership camp in 2012. His role as a communications liaison in the BILD programme gave him the responsibility of sharing the significant outcomes of the programme each year.

Over the four-year period BILD was supported by UK Sport, YST and the TOP Foundation, Tanzania benefitted from:

- High quality leadership training
- Significant human capacity development
- A programme that can be sustained as it is embedded into the work of the NSC
- A programme that is far-reaching
- A different way to think about sport, particularly among teachers
- Significant professional development
- Activities which cater for the inclusion of people with disabilities
- Activities which increase the participation of women and girls
- An increased sense of volunteerism among Tanzanians
- Increased communications
- Quality partnership work between Tanzanian and UK partners

BILD has provided Tanzania with a solution to complement the work of the NSC and as a model needed by the country. The planning process also ensured that key partners were identified and their strengths and skills were fully utilised in each BILD programme hub.

The BILD programme, managed by UK Sport’s international development charity partner, International Inspiration, is now operational in Ghana with future prospects of establishing BILD in the Caribbean.

Left Right Think-Tank, Australia: Providing a Place for Young People in Public Policy

Executive Summary



Founded in 2008, Left Right Think-Tank is the first independent, non-partisan and youth-led think tank in Australia. Left Right's vision is for a society that seeks and embraces the ideas of young people on issues of broad community concern. Young people are not only tomorrow's leaders but also a powerful catalyst for change today, and should have a voice in policy decisions.

It is Left Right's mission to engage young people in public policy through education and policy development programs. Left Right believes that engaging young people in the creation and advocacy of public policy can encourage society to better value the ideas of young people.



Image 1: *Left Right Think-Tank staff and Fellows advocating policies at Parliament House, Canberra.*

Our rationale

There are currently few avenues for young people to express their views on public policy in an independent way. The vast majority of Australian youth organisations are linked to major political parties, driven by particular political ideologies, or focus on issue-specific advocacy. Left Right offers an alternative model. It allows young people to engage with a broad range of issues in a non-partisan, evidence-based environment.

Young people are increasingly dissatisfied with political processes as a result of the lack of vision and long-term thinking in current politics. To move beyond the short-termism that pervades a great deal of current politics and policy, Left Right focuses on issues that are crucial to the long-term development of Australia, such as economic sustainability, infrastructure, education and governance.

What we offer

Left Right fulfils its mission to involve young people in public policy through its flagship program, the Policy Fellowship Program. This annual program operates in four states, and offers young people the opportunity to produce public policy.

The Policy Fellowship Program's goals are two-fold: firstly, to provide young people with an opportunity to learn about the nature, importance and impact of public policy; and secondly, to support young people in developing evidence-based policy recommendations which demonstrate the capacity of young people to participate meaningfully in public policy debates.

The Policy Fellowship Program provides education and practice in policy development. Fellows participate in a series of educational workshops, presented by Left Right staff and leaders from government, business and academia. These workshops are designed around a curriculum that has been developed by Left Right staff and external advisors over the past five years. The curriculum addresses policy-making essentials including policy research and writing, stakeholder consultation and advocacy, as well as general topics such as leadership and presentation skills.

At the same time, Fellows work together to research, develop and advocate a policy paper and recommendations. Left Right staff members set topics and focus areas, which concentrate on pressing issues of long-term significance.

Left Right's Policy Fellowship Program educates young people about public policy through a unique and innovative curriculum that seamlessly integrates theory and practice. The program is structured to follow policy development processes. When Fellows are initially researching their policy topics they also participate in workshops about research skills, and when they are advocating their recommendations they also participate in communication and advocacy training with experienced guest speakers. Fellows put the skills they develop into practice as they progress through the program, and appreciate the value of rigorous evidence-based policy when they produce their final recommendations.



Image 2: *Left Right Think-Tank staff brainstorming.*

People supporting people

Fellows participating in the Policy Fellowship Program are young people, aged 15 to 24. Left Right is staffed by volunteers, all drawn from this same age group. Left Right also engages with and consults a broad range of stakeholders – young people, and also influential figures in government, business and academia. Policy recommendations are primarily directed at Federal and state decision-makers.

Delivery

The Policy Fellowship Program engages 40 Fellows annually across four states. Fellows are supported by Left Right's staff-base of 70 young people. Staff are involved in delivering the Policy Fellowship Program and managing the organisation. Many staff members were previously Fellows.

Left Right further engages young people through organised events and online discussions, which often focus on the Policy Fellowship topics. Left Right has an extremely active online community and a Facebook page with over 4,500 likes.

The Policy Fellowship Program directly impacts participants by providing them with education in public policy development and opportunities to put their education into practice. At the same time, it seeks to affect public policy debates by advocating thoroughly-researched policy recommendations on key policy areas of long-term importance. Consistent stakeholder consultation also encourages these discussions.

Left Right currently delivers the Policy Fellowship Program in New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia. Interested volunteers from other states can join our national team.

Program delivery is centred on the Policy Fellowship curriculum, which could be modified according to different national contexts.

Program schedules

The Policy Fellowship Program runs once a year over an eight-month period from April to November. Outside of that period, Left Right continues to advocate the policies developed through the Program, and works on other initiatives.



Image 3: A Left Right Think-Tank workshop.

Conclusion

Left Right's policies have been well-received, and have attracted citations in government reports and national media. The Policy Fellowship Program is the cornerstone of Left Right's work to engage young people in public policy. The success of the program lies in a thorough and constantly evolving curriculum, a highly motivated and enthusiastic team of staff and Fellows, and a continually growing network of influential persons, who regularly provide education, consultation and partnership opportunities. The Policy Fellowship Program equips young people with skills and practical experience, and empowers them to become valued public policy contributors.

Left Right makes the following recommendations to engage young people in public policy:

1. Organisations wishing to adopt Left Right's Policy Fellowship model should develop a curriculum to guide education and policy development. Organisations should also strive to connect Fellows and staff with leaders in the public policy field.
2. Policy Fellowship Programs should incorporate theoretical foundations and practical experience.
3. Policy Fellowship topics and focus areas should be clearly defined.

Further Information

Further information can be found at www.leftright.org.au, or by contacting Ryan Harvey, CEO on r.harvey@letright.org.au or +61 417 246 140.

Examples of media reporting of Left Right's work can be found at:

Australian Government Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education. 2012. 'Innovation Policy Report: May 2012'. p.12. <http://www.innovation.gov.au/INNOVATION/REPORTSANDSTUDIES/Pages/InnovationPolicyReport.aspx>

Left Right Think Tank. 2010. 'Commission for Children, Young People and Child Guardian: Focus Forum on Youth Homelessness'. <http://www.cypcg.qld.gov.au/Library/ppt/LRTT-Focus-Forum-Presentation.pdf>

Lenaghan, N. 'Rethink urged on research'. Australian Financial Review. 16 April 2012. http://www.afr.com/p/national/rethink_urged_on_research_DFkezPerA86ybMYnfeGwvO

Preiss, B. 'Careers in agriculture fail to win hearts and minds of the young'. The Age. 7 January 2013. <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/careers-in-agriculture-fail-to-win-hearts-and-minds-of-the-young-20130106-2cb53.html#ixzz2JKP8hefG>

Trounson, A. 'Push for industry vouchers to put research where it matters'. The Australian. 28 March 2012. <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/push-for-industry-vouchers-to-put-research-where-it-matters/story-e6frgcjx-1226311725195>

Australian Sports Outreach Program, Australia

Monitoring, Evaluation and Research in Pacific Country Programs

Executive summary

This case study outlines how the Australian Government, through a partnership between the Australian Agency for Development (AusAID) and the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), has invested in monitoring, evaluation and research to build the evidence base for sport as a tool that can be used to meet a range of development objectives. It describes the importance of building the capacity of local partners to better monitor outcomes, how the Australian Sports Outreach Program (ASOP) and Pacific Country Programs use sophisticated evaluation methods to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of interventions, and how research is used to understand the impact of its programs within a range of socio-cultural contexts throughout the Pacific. Preliminary findings from the research conducted in late 2012 are also included.

Why?

Important claims have been made about the power of sport to contribute to a wide range of development objectives; however they often lack the support of sound evidence. The ASOP Country Program monitoring, evaluation and research project seeks to address this gap by providing evidence of the contribution of sport to physical and social well-being in the Pacific region.

What?

The Australian Government, through a partnership between AusAID and the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), has invested approximately \$2 million to assess the contribution of sport to development outcomes and to build the capacity of Pacific partners to deliver effective programs. To achieve this, the ASC engaged an independent consulting firm to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the ASOP in the Pacific, considering the efficiency of the program's management, impact and sustainability.

Three distinct, but related methods are employed. These include:

- **Monitoring:** Participatory monitoring and evaluation approaches have been developed, which focus on the experience of beneficiaries and those who deliver the program at the community level. This component aims to build the capacity of partners, volunteers and others to reflect on and monitor the progress of activities, and to detail why the project is important to them.
- **Evaluation:** This component involves an annual participatory organisational capacity assessment of partner organisations in 2012 and 2013. This allows for reflection on progress over time with a collaborative evaluation of each program due in 2014.
- **Research:** Integrated research with a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods has been used to gather evidence of the contribution that ASOP activities have made to development outcomes in areas such as health, social inclusion and social cohesion.

Who?

Monitoring and evaluation will focus mainly on building the capacity of partners, coaches and volunteers to collect and analyse data about their programs. This will enhance program planning and delivery.

The quantitative research audience depends on the specific research questions asked. In Tonga, questions regarding changes in health-related knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of Tonga women following a social marketing campaign to encourage physical activity (using the tagline of 'easy, exciting and everywhere') were answered using a nationally representative sample of 1,192 Tongan women in the 16-45 age range. By contrast, in Nauru, the quantitative research will collect data from ASOP participants in all 15 communities where program ASOP activities are taking place.

The qualitative research audience include individuals who participate in ASOP activities, key informants and people from communities.



The ASOP team in Tonga undertaking the participatory organisational capacity assessment



Training of dozens of enumerators in Tonga to conduct the nationally representative survey

The preliminary findings from the Tonga quantitative research indicate there is very high recall of the social marketing campaign (over 90 per cent). Message recall is a critical element of evaluating social marketing campaigns because changes in knowledge and attitudes are recognised precursors to behavioural change.

Many participants who took part in the qualitative research in Tonga indicated they had made lifestyle changes and increased their awareness of the health benefits of physical activity since their participation in the program. Importantly, many participants noted a positive shift in community attitudes towards women of all ages being actively engaged in sports - a shift from the dominant expectation that married women should stay at home, complete chores and care for their children.

How?

Training in participatory forms of monitoring has taken place in six countries since July 2012 and is being followed up with ongoing support in collecting, collating and analysing data. The training and support have resulted in improvements in the capacity of partners to monitor and evaluate their own progress against their objectives.

Participatory organisational capacity assessments have been conducted in most countries, resulting in the development of a capacity development plan, which will guide partners in identifying those areas that require improvement.

Preliminary results from qualitative research conducted in Vanuatu indicate that people with disability are highly integrated into sports activities at the community level. The research, which included consultation with more than 30 people with disability and their carers, also indicated that sport has helped to improve community perceptions of people with disability. Greater levels of self-efficacy of young people with disability and a greater appreciation of their abilities by carers and the broader community indicate that sport has significant potential to improve social inclusion outcomes in Vanuatu.

When

This project consists of two phases. Phase One ran from July 2011 to June 2012 and involved scoping visits to selected Pacific countries, design, development, peer review and approval of a monitoring, evaluation and research plan. Phase Two, the implementation of this plan, began in July 2012 and will continue until June 2014.

Where

ASOP Country Programs are delivered with government and civil society partners in seven Pacific countries: Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Monitoring, evaluation, and capacity building will take place in all countries. Qualitative research will be conducted in Nauru, Fiji, Tonga and Vanuatu, with the quantitative research focusing on Nauru and Tonga.

Conclusion

While this project is focused on the Pacific, the insights will be important for organisations around the world wishing to deliver more effective programs. This is particularly so for issues such as beneficiary and volunteer retention, organisational capacity building, best practice participatory monitoring and evaluation approaches, and integrated research design for program impact assessment.

So far this project has provided some key insights that may benefit organisations wishing to design similar projects, such as:

- the importance of taking enough time during the design phase so that complex projects are planned properly;
- understanding that building the capacity of local people is highly complex and costly due to cultural variances, and a lack of local expertise to support in-country training and mentoring;
- ensuring the monitoring, evaluation and research plan is flexible so it can be modified to reflect any changed priorities.

Further information

For further information about the ASOP, please visit the following website:

<http://www.ausport.gov.au/supporting/international/programs/pacific>

or contact Dr Allison Simons at Allison.Simons@ausport.gov.au.

GOALS (Generating Opportunities and Learning through Sport) Project, Northern Ireland

Executive Summary

The GOALS (Generating Opportunities and Learning through Sport) project is a two year (May 2011-2013) targeted approach funded via Comic Relief to engage 300 at risk youth with a specific targeted intervention with a group of 20 age range 15-21 years through an innovative sports inclusion project. (www.activecommunities.ie/projects)

The age range is prevalent to feedback received from local organisations that have found this group particularly hard to engage. The project is targeted at promoting a positive change through the use of activities and provision that is aimed to motivate and challenge. In designing the methodology we are conscious that an alternative mechanism of engagement and delivery is paramount to achieve our outcomes. It should be noted that all of these young people are detached from mainstream provision and it is only through offering activities that will not only invoke responses, breakdown barriers and present pathways, will the project present possible options to methods used previously. Interim evaluation results via University of Ulster for the period January 2012-December 2012 revealed a 65% increase in improving life opportunities for participants in accessing training, education and further opportunities. The sporting and vocational activities proved effective in providing the young men with structure and purpose in their lives. Through them the group developed confidence and the motivation to seek employment.

Game plan

The role of sport in social change agenda, within at risk and gang environments draws information from projects that follow in most instances the 6 phase sport logic model which leads through outputs/opportunities and finishes with strategic social outcomes. However within GOALS we set out to challenge behaviour as the cornerstone of our methodology. In order to achieve this we adapted the Dr Larry Bendro framework of reclaiming at risk youth 1990. The approach was tested in South Africa during the term of Nelson Mandela and develops through four interlocking parts which builds resilience and progression; **Belonging, Independence, Generosity, Mastery**, also known as the Circle of Courage. The four interlocking themes are embedded within an understanding framework which seeks to **connect, clarify** and **restore** young people's connections with themselves, community and family. (www.reclaiming.com)

In most cases the communities perceptions and comments about the young person has reinforced their attitude of getting involved in anti-community behaviour. Empowering and enabling young people to increase self-esteem, confidence, respond to negative comments both in the community and through peer influence, is a crucial element of them moving forward. The role of sport then becomes embedded within the motivators for change.

Tactics

- To work with local stakeholders and other agencies were appropriate to secure commitment in targeting this specific group including: Police Service of Northern Ireland, Youth Justice Agency, Community Safety Forum/Partnership, Cumann Sport an Phobail, Integrated Services for Children and Young People, Residents Association, Community Restorative Justice Ireland.

- To develop and design with our partners a high quality and innovative programme tailored to the needs of participants to help break the cycle of underachievement
- To contribute to the development of a supportive community infrastructure for programme participants through signposting and volunteering
- To work with young people through Shiers participation model to ensure commitment, accountability and ownership at the outset.

Focusing on our commitment to grassroots and participatory relationships we organised an introduction through a local youth engagement worker. Given that these young people came with attitude, and are very wary of outsiders, the role of the local organisation/individual as our enabler was crucial to start the process. Securing commitment and buy in either through curiosity or the sense of something new was crucial in these early stages.

Identifying the opponent



GOALS meet Ministers, Stormont

GOALS is a targeted intervention to work with a group of 20 young males age range 15-21 years who are causing serious safety concerns within their community due to their high risk behaviour fuelled via drugs and alcohol. Additionally it seeks to provide opportunities for 300 young people within the community in times of potential risky behaviours. Working in partnership with local organisations who have managed to attract some of this identified group through football, we wanted to build foundations and future pathways that will offer more positive avenues for these young people. Ballymurphy, located in West Belfast ranks as one of the most highly deprived communities in Northern

Ireland with educational underachievement; those on state benefits, single parent families and incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour blighting the landscape, barriers to involvement are all too easily grasped for young people.

The aim of the project is to use behaviours, emotions and ethics associated with sport as a driver to help address social conditions and lack of aspirations within young people in the community. Our goal is to help inspire those young people so they have an opportunity to progress into new avenues of education, community development, youth work, sports coaching or leadership.

Fostering positive mentality

There are numerous personal, social, educational and health related benefits that can be achieved as a result of participation within this project. An example of some of the project outputs have been highlighted below:

- Young people engaged in capacity building and personal development programme (active engagement within community and enhanced self-esteem / confidence)

- Young people gaining a minimum of 1 qualifications (re-engagement within education, improved employability, improved social and interpersonal skills, improved level of qualification at a minimum of Level 1 or 2)
- Young people signposted to existing programmes/new programmes in local communities (improved sense of achievement amongst young people, increased number of young people accessing services / programmes, progress towards future career pathway)
- Mentoring and support provided to young people 15-21 within the project in two years (sustained engagement of NEET young people, improved physical and mental health, decreased feelings of isolation, increased access to advice and support)

Changing the game

Given that the project is less than 18 months old, some of the achievements of this group and as individuals have been remarkable. As mentioned previously the group were high risk and we had to use a number of mechanisms to enable us to continue our work. However we have kept pushing forward and finally the group are now starting to see how they need to change their behaviours to progress. The most poignant story and one of tremendous courage and resilience came within the month of February 2012. One of our participants after attending his granddad's funeral consumed a large amount of alcohol and as a result took his life. The impact of this on his friends, staff and community has been overwhelming. Not two weeks after his funeral, a group of 8 from the project began a 35 hour "Get started in Sport" project with Active Communities Network and the Princes Trust with 10 other participants across Belfast. They achieved their award and the US Consulate came to the project and awarded them with their certificates, a true testament to what their friend's death harnessed in them.



Successful awardees with their certificates from the Get Started in Sport Project

Conclusion

There appears to be strong anecdotal and theoretical evidence that indicates that sports based programmes can help young people's personal and social development, including young people who have experienced stress and trauma. Physical activity has a direct impact on the quality of everyday life including physical, emotional, social and cognitive functions. Heath and McLaughlin 1993 assert that effective youth organisations understand and are part of the ecology of a neighbourhood. Furthermore these organisations possess leaders with "fire in the belly". That is our assessment of the core strength of the GOALS programme. They have focused on the primacy of relationships, on the personal strengths within young men, on their dignity and value of people and have added to their sense of possibility by widening their choices and strengthening their connection to others⁹.

⁹ University of Ulster evaluator's comments

The following observations were made about the use of sporting activities for the young people:

- Accreditation of training courses matters;
- Individual motivation and openness to learning builds from having a successful experience;
- Attending an organised program with at least one other member of your group is a source of support;
- Sport qualifications offer a platform for group members to lead other young people in organised activities;
- It was significant that the activities required participants to move out beyond their own community boundaries;
- The range of sporting activities organised have had a stabilizing effect on group members;
- Group participants had a sense of the sporting experiences fostering pro social values and skills;

Future research into interventions such as those adapted within the GOALS program could look more closely at the impact of sport and exercise within the program measuring impact upon emotional well-being, resilience and behaviour.

A Framework for Practice



Further Information can be found from:

Active Communities Network, Newhill Youth Centre, Belfast BT12 7FX

Telephone: 02890 245969

Mobile: 07837486042

www.activecommunities.org.uk

Michael Mc Cusker, Head of Operations

Copies of interim evaluations from University of Ulster available on request

Young Scot - Youth Legacy Ambassador Programme, Scotland



In the run up to the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, Young Scot, the national youth information and citizenship charity, has been working in partnership with the Scottish Government and all 32 local authorities to support the delivery of a lasting legacy for young people, through the Youth Legacy Ambassador Programme 2014.

Established in 2010, the programme has trained over 110 Youth Legacy Ambassadors across Scotland to champion and connect other young people to the wide range of lasting benefits major sporting events can bring to local communities.

Supported at both a local and national level, the Youth Legacy Ambassador's role looks at not only the physical benefits of sport, but has a strong focus on all four legacy themes: active, connected, sustainable and flourishing. From organising school Commonwealth Culture days in Glasgow, volunteering at Scotland House at London 2012, to hosting Olympic community events in Shetland – the ambassadors have been working hard to build on the momentum from the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics to ensure young people reap the benefits of major sporting events.

This Case study focuses on three Youth Legacy Ambassadors:

- Gemma Gillian, 21 from North Ayrshire;
- Amiee Alexander, 21 from North Ayrshire; and
- Adam Martin, 21 years from East Lothian

Gemma Gillian and Amiee Alexander – Youth Legacy Ambassadors



“Being a Youth Legacy Ambassador so far has been a great experience where I have met many new friends and had the chance to be a part of some brilliant events.” - Aimee Alexander.

Gemma Gillian and Amiee Alexander are Commonwealth Games Youth Legacy Ambassadors. After hearing about the Young Scot Commonwealth Games Youth Legacy Ambassador programme at a conference held in North Ayrshire Leisure, Gemma and Amiee thought it sounded like a great opportunity to get involved with.

During the Young Scot Youth Legacy Ambassador recruitment phase, Gemma and Amiee shared an aspiration to positively impact and inspire the younger generation through their involvement in the programme. They planned to create a lasting legacy in Scotland that young people could relate and associate to and wanted to be a role model to their peers.

Both Gemma and Amiee were successful applicants. Their first associative event was the North Ayrshire Community Games, which ran for three days. In preparation for the event, Gemma and Amiee visited 25 local primary schools to promote the event and to discuss the legacy of the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Day one and day two focused on athletics for Primary 5 pupils and over 250 pupils attended, participating in a number of the organised athletic stations. The activities in day three – consisting of exhibitions from local sports clubs, sport taster sessions (such as gymnastics, football, hockey, karate and dance), and a 1 mile fun run – were open to the public, attracting over 1,000 people from the local community.

During a recent interview with the Youth Legacy Ambassadors, Gemma and Amiee said:

“We have both made new friends through the programme. We had attended conferences such as the 2018 Youth Olympic Bid in Glasgow and the Youth Legacy Showcase Event that the Minister for Sport and Commonwealth attended. We feel that we have gained more confidence and team building skills as we have to work alongside other ambassadors.”

Gemma and Amiee have started their HNC course in Sports Coaching with Development of Sports at James Watt College in Inverclyde. They have also been successful in securing work experience with Coca-Cola during the 2012 Olympics in London this summer.

In the future, they hope to put their experience as a Youth Legacy Ambassador to use when they move on to university. They also believe their experiences and skills gained as Ambassadors will benefit them when they finish education and move into a professional career. According to Michelle Collins, Legacy Lead, North Ayrshire Council: “The girls have benefited greatly from being part of the YLA programme. They enjoy working towards events and visiting primary schools.”

Adam Martin, Youth Legacy Ambassador



“The highlight of the Youth Legacy Ambassador role was the Cluster Olympic Festival in June of last year which ran in conjunction with National Schools Sports Week (NSSW). This event was ran predominantly by me and included 450 Primary 5 children from the local area and covered nine different sports which crossed the Olympics, Winter Olympics and Paralympics sports. I organised every child into 1 of 14 countries and then they were told that in class they were to research the countries culture and sporting achievements and also create flags for the opening

ceremony. The event was a massive success with everyone enjoying themselves and learning the values of the Olympic and Paralympics along the way, and the format that I had created is being used for the first ever East Lothian Primary Youth Games which will involve 1000 children to mark the opening of the new athletics stadium and the passing through of the Olympic Flame.”

Adam Martin is 21 years old and hails from East Lothian. He became involved as a Young Scot Youth Legacy Ambassador after taking part in the 2012 Delhi Commonwealth Games as part of the Handover Ceremony for Glasgow 2014. On his return, Adam was approached by Young Scot and asked if he would like to become a Youth Legacy Ambassador for his local area, and he was very keen to be involved as the 2014 Commonwealth Games is a personal passion.

Adam’s main objective as a Youth Legacy Ambassador is to inspire and recruit as many local young people in leading active lifestyles and getting involved in the Active theme of the 2014 Commonwealth Games. As a Sports Coach with Active Schools, his job is to encourage young children to take part and

try their best in a wide range of sporting activities and to see this develop within local clubs and classes opening up in East Lothian is a personal aim of his. Adam has also mentioned that he would like to use this opportunity as a Youth Legacy Ambassador to improve his range of skills in the field of sport and exercise, in order to appeal to as many young people as possible.

One of Adam's first tasks as a Youth Legacy Ambassador was to complete training on what this role would entail. He attended training in the Aberdeen Sports Village and he was taught the fundamentals of what the legacy of the 2014 Commonwealth Games hopes to achieve, and the practical skills he would require to help make the legacy as prevalent as possible. This included video recording training and photography classes.

Since the training session, Adam and another local Youth Legacy Ambassador, Jade Hall, have recently focused their activities on the Active theme of the legacy. As they share an enthusiasm and passion for sports and are trained Sports Coaches, they already had a good network of colleagues at their disposal – and they thought recruiting volunteers to help them was one of their top priorities.

They have recently set-up **Olympics Clubs** in three of the local primary schools, and these clubs meet during lunchtime to allow the pupils involved the best opportunity to get involved in activities. These clubs aim to teach the pupils the value of sport and exercise whilst educating them on the Olympic and Paralympics values, and encouraging them to promote Scotland by becoming role models in the field of sport. According to Adam, *“the legacy has had a massive impact on me, and has allowed me to develop as an individual. Prior to becoming a YLA, I simply coached sessions and attended the occasional festival. Now I am at the centre of many big projects and now seek to organise events myself to best help the legacy of the Glasgow 2014 Games, as I am really enthusiastic and passionate about trying to make these games as exciting as possible.”*

Since taking on his role as a Youth Legacy Ambassador, Adam has also continued his work in other sports that have always been of interest to him – basketball and lawn bowls. He started up and coached the Tranent Primary Basketball Club and since starting Active Schools, the club has become increasingly popular that it has been handed over to the Sports Development team for ease and access of those involved to progress through the Development Framework in place. This team is now in the Junior Jam League and, with support, Adam sourced funding to buy the team uniform specifically for the League.

The biggest achievement that Adam attributes to his role as a Youth Legacy Ambassador is his winning East Lothian's Young Volunteer of the Year in 2011 because of both his contributions to Active Schools and his legacy work over the previous year. More recently, Adam has been offered a place as a Team Leader at the Media Centre for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games. Adam has also been given the opportunity to work at the Paralympics Exhibition in Glasgow, been part of a consultation group for the Glasgow Youth Olympic bid in 2018, and been given a work experience placement at Young Scot. With help from Young Scot and the legacy team, Adam feels that he can continue to grow in the role of Youth Legacy Ambassador and can continue to seek new opportunities in the build up to 2014.

In his local area, Adam notes that the Olympic Clubs and basketball sessions are growing each year and he hopes to eventually get the Olympic Club in a number of various primary schools around East Lothian.

He also hopes that the skills and experience he has had in his role will help him in his pursuit of a career in Sport or Event Management, which is a career he has aspired to have for many years. Adam says:

“With all the training and opportunities put in place by Young Scot and the Games Legacy team, I have also improved the skills I have and I am still looking for way to personally improve myself in the role. I’ve been given the opportunity to work at a Paralympics Exhibition in Glasgow, been part of a consultation group for the Glasgow Youth Olympic bid in 2018 and also given a work experience placement at the Young Scot office itself as well as other opportunities around the country.”

Youth Sport Trust International, United Kingdom

Executive Summary

Physical Education (PE) and sport are an important part of a child's development and learning, benefiting their physical and mental wellbeing, increasing attendance and attainment, but above all providing young people with a safe learning environment to experiment with their behaviour and grow their leadership and life skills.

For the last 50 years the power of sport to improve young people's lives has been an assumed outcome. In more recent years, as reported by the Institute of Youth Sport Loughborough University (2010), hard evidence is starting to emerge that:

- A positive relationship exists between physical activity and cognition, with primary and middle-school age children gaining the most benefit in terms of enhanced cognitive function.
- 10 minutes of organised physical activity included into the school day improves classroom behaviour.
- Young individuals who participate in organised sport demonstrate lower rates of anti-social behaviour.

The Youth Sport Trust (YST) is a UK charity and has for the last 18 years been working in partnership with government ministries, schools and young people across the Commonwealth to improve the lives of young people using the power of sport.

While the social and educational challenges in each country are different, the principles of high quality PE and sport and the educational outcomes on young people are similar.

The most effective interventions and principles in supporting high quality PE and sport

The YST team has been working with experienced partners based in the UK (including the British Council (BC), UNICEF, UK Sport, LOCOG 2012 and the charitable foundation, International Inspiration) and collaborating with a wider range of country partners representing all Commonwealth regions, specifically in Australia, Bangladesh, Botswana, Cameroon, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe. As such, the team at the YST have been able to highlight the most effective interventions and principles in supporting high quality PE and sport:

A table of examples of effective interventions to support high quality PE and sport

Facilitate	Through expert guidance and support, national policy and bespoke curriculum development. Build human capacity and up skilling of education leaders, teachers and community coaches.
Instil	Through train the trainer support, provide non-specialist teachers with the confidence and competence to deliver high quality PE and sport. Developing bespoke resources to support the teachers and community coaches.
Empower	Through train the trainer support, empower young people to become effective leaders and role models to their peers. To take responsibility for their own education and learning.

Highlights of collaborative activity:

Indigenous PE Resources in India

Indigenous PE resources cards, called PEC, have been developed specifically for the Indian education system that supports the teaching of high quality PE. Based on the Youth Sport Trust's TOPs card, the PEC cards provided support to non specialist practitioners via local cascade training delivered by Indian PEC Master Trainers. The PEC cards and training to date has been delivered to over 200,000 teachers in three states in India. (Source BC).

Continuum of development nurturing international trainers – Malaysia and beyond

The YST's train the trainer programmes are based on strong learning pathways that are unique to each person. It is a journey of training, mentored support and delivery practice in-country. Progression along this pathway from local tutor, to lead trainer, to international trainer relies on all of the above together with an assessment of skills and competencies.

Following the set in-country training, two Malaysian local tutors stood out amongst their peers showing particular promise. With encouragement they both worked hard to reach an advanced level within the Malaysian schools; training local practitioners to deliver TOPs and Youth Sport Leadership programmes.

Eventually, the two practitioners started to be mentored by the YST's international trainers, firstly in Indonesia where the cultural differences were less marked and then in two other countries. These two individuals are now representing the YST as international trainers in their own right; creating a really truly diverse and international team of international trainers.

The team have ambitions to extent the international flavour of the team and are seeing opportunities in other countries, including the new BILD Ghana network of trainers. The YST is committed to offering a developmental pathway that uses the combined skills that Commonwealth countries have to offer to improve young people's educational outcomes.



Young People leading the way – numerous countries

For over 10 years in partnership with the BC, the YST has run the Dreams + Teams leadership programme. At its peak it was the largest school linking programme through sport in the world. *Dreams + Teams* placed young people at the centre of sharing of practice between UK schools and schools in other Commonwealth countries. It used sport as a common language, instilling respect, encouraging

personal growth and creating mutual understanding between the young people. It has challenged young people's perceptions of each other and improved the lives of hundreds of young sports leaders across the Commonwealth.

Building leadership capacity in Ghana

In collaboration with the University of Ghana, International Inspiration and the TOP Foundation, a four year project called BILD (Beckwith International Leadership Development) is building a pathway for participants, from sports leaders to local tutors to master trainers. BILD is effectively building capacity within Ghana for the sports leaders of tomorrow. BILD is aiming to reduce the “parachuting in” of overseas trainers when training is required. It is also supporting Ghana with a *context specific* capacity building of university students, teachers, government officials – for those that have the leadership potential to take up future leadership positions within Ghana.



Conclusion

The YST observes that:

The power of sport to improve educational and life outcomes is under used by governments of countries of the Commonwealth. Building sustainable in-country networks of PE and sport trainers, as pioneered by the BILD networks in Ghana and Tanzania, could allow countries and international funders to maximise the impact of sports for development projects and stop ‘drop-in, drop-out’ training.

Sport is central to the Commonwealth identity and has the potential to drive three strong outcomes:

- Sporting talent
- Youth leadership and building a culture of volunteering
- Improving mental and physical health outcomes

Sport changes lives. Our organisation is passionate about helping all young people to achieve their full potential by delivering high quality physical education and sport.

Further information

Visit: www.youthsporttrust.org/

BILD: Ghana

www.ug.ghanacampusnet.com/campus_news/beckwith-international-leadership-development-holds-first-lead-trainers-training

www.facebook.com/pages/Beckwith-International-Leadership-Development-BILD-Ghana-Programme/170495916328778

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The Belize National Youth Development Policy Process

An evidence-based approach to Youth Participation in developing Social Policy



Belize has a population of approximately 330,000 individuals of which 70% are under the age of 35 years (Statistical Institute of Belize, 2010)¹⁰. With such a young population, the Government of Belize seized the opportunity to foster a shared-leadership approach in developing the National Youth Development of Belize (NYDP) 2012-2022.

In 2011, approximately eighty young leaders from across the country were recruited by the Department of Youth Services in the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to participate

in training sessions in facilitation, presentation skills and policy dialogue in an attempt to have young people lead the process in revising the draft of the National Youth Development Policy.

In the process of capacity development, the Commonwealth Youth Programme, Caribbean Centre contributed in the identification of key issues affecting young people in the Belizean society, brought these youth leaders to the awareness of their role in addressing these issues, and helped them to identify partner agencies in their community to work with alongside Government on youth development. Through a Strengthening of Youth Governance Systems Workshop hosted by the Commonwealth Youth Programme Caribbean Centre (CYPCC) and supported by the St Vincent and Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago National Youth Councils, youth leaders in Belize vividly saw their role in charting the way forward for their own development. At this workshop, the National Youth Council of Belize (NYCB) Planning Committee was formed.



Members of the NYCB Planning Committee, who were also trained, led in consultations in 2011 in the six districts of Belize engaging youth in visioning exercises and used a “Tortilla Mapping” tool- a Belizean customisation of a standard PLA tool (Venn Diagram) in problem identification. In each district, there were three workshops that were held for 15 – 19 year olds, 20 – 29 year olds, and youth organizations, which captured the dreams and aspirations of young people, the roles that organizations play in addressing their needs, and the gaps that needed to be filled. Alongside the desire to produce a revised National Youth Development Policy, it was necessary to build a Social Protection System to support children and youth along the Life Cycle in Belize.

As a testament to the theme for the policy process, “Belizean Youth Taking The Lead”, the young people worked on prioritizing all the goals outlined in the NYDP and led in post-consultations as the goals and issues identified were collated and reported back to the young people and youth organizations countrywide.

¹⁰ Statistical Institute of Belize. 2010 Belize National Census. Belmopan, SIB.



In January 2013, the National Youth Development Policy was presented and approved in Cabinet, which cemented the Government's commitment to the youth development agenda and recognized the role of young people in decision-making and youth leadership. These are paramount principles in achieving youth empowerment and development.

The youth leaders worked with the Department of Youth Services in planning the launch of the National Youth Development Policy 2012-2022,

and they presented the Goals and Strategic Framework outlined in the policy in drama, song, poetry and dance. This medium allowed for the youth to use art as a means of expression and signalled the ownership of the policy in steering the way forward for their own development.

With the impending need to adapt the Youth Development Index to track the success of implementation of the National Youth Development Policy, the National Youth Council of Belize will play a pivotal role in monitoring and evaluation, once they become fully operational in mid-2013. Throughout the entire process, UNICEF Belize has offered technical and financial support to complement that of the Government of Belize and has pledged to continue supporting the youth as they seek to fully integrate the Adolescent Well-being Framework in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the National Youth Development Policy. In addition, the Government hopes to work with UNICEF Belize and The University of West Indies Belize Open Campus through a Memorandum of Understanding on providing free courses to all members of the National Youth Council of Belize Executive Body in Financial Management, Project Management, Grant Proposal Writing, Monitoring and Evaluation of Social Programmes and Organizational Behaviour and Leadership.



As the Minister of State with responsibility for Youth and Sports, in the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Hon. Herman Longworth, states, "In order for us to derive maximum benefit from our most [valuable] human resource we must provide youth with a supportive, participatory and informative environment that will enable them to transition from dependency of childhood through the challenges of adolescence and finally to the autonomy and responsibility of adulthood".¹¹ This is the hope for all Belizean youth and the premise on which the National Youth Development Policy 2012-2022 is built.

¹¹ Government of Belize, 2012. National Youth Development Policy of Belize 2012-2022. Belize; Print Belize Ltd.

National Youth Policy, Barbados

An exercise in participatory democracy by young people

Executive Summary

The National Youth Policy of Barbados 2011 (NYP) represents Government's commitment to provide enlightened social policy provisions addressing needs of young people and furthering its youth development agenda. The NYP 2011 provides an intervention strategy for a cohort group called youth which comprises 60,800 persons or 22.5% of the population.

The National Youth Policy of Barbados 2011 is a framework for action; a menu of options from which the Government and people of Barbados must choose to ensure that young people are empowered to make a significant contribution to the process of nation building in a rapidly changing world.

Section one of the policy establishes the contemporary situational context of young people based on both socio-historical data, current service provisions for young people and an examination of their aspiration, rights and roles in a post-modern society. In addition, the second part of the policy presents an intervention framework which takes into account socio-historical needs and views of young people and stakeholders.

The NYP 2011 is considered as a best practice model not only by meeting minimum quality standards requirements for monitoring and evaluation but more importantly because of the participatory and youth-centered process which allowed young people to develop goals, objectives and make recommendations on a way forward.

The process represented a paradigm shift from traditional approaches of exclusion of young people to an inclusive one where the confidence, creativity and independence of young people contributed to the change agenda for personal, community and national development.

The NYP 2011 continues to achieve Government and stakeholder support. The next step therefore is to roll out an empirically derived implementation framework that seeks to implement, inter alia, the centre-pieces of the policy: the establishment of The Caribbean Centre for Socio-economic Innovation and a National Youth Information Network.

Rationale

The need for a written National Youth Policy was advanced at the Commonwealth Youth Ministers meeting in Trinidad in Tobago in May 1995. It was agreed that all member Governments of the Commonwealth would formulate or update their National Youth Policies by the year 2000. This need arose out of a normative approach sought to raise the profile and condition of young people and address historical imbalances.

The central thesis of youth research has been that in spite of making up a significant proportion of the population, young people suffer the greatest in terms of unemployment and underemployment and other forms of marginalization which are rooted in historical and economic factors. (Linden Lewis 1991, Deosaran 1992, Carter 1994).

In addition, Carter 1994 espoused the view that the traditional social institutions, were failing to pass on to young people the core values that held Barbadian society together. In the face of relentless cultural penetration, core values like a positive sense of self, personal development, caring for others, honesty, integrity, love, respect, discipline, responsibility and reciprocity were being eroded. If the society was

to survive and prosper, ways had to be found to expose children and young people to these values and related principles, with the hope of them being inculcated and internalized.

The NYP 2011 was developed as a codified document that provided critical interventions to transmit the core values identified by young people and address concerns of stakeholders. It represents an enlightened policy to address the genuine concerns of young people, redressing the traditional piece-meal and incremental approach of pre and post-independence social policy development for young people. Consequently, a modern paradigm was created which represents a social contract between Government and its young people.

The major assumption is that the NYP 2011 will transfer principles and values. If these principles are internalized then they would guide the behavior of young people for the rest of their lives creating a spirit of community; discipline; equal opportunities; good manners; honesty; integrity; citizenship; respect for other authority; volunteerism; selfless service.

Formulation of the NYP

The Barbados Government took the decision in September 2009 to start the process of formulating a National Youth Policy by establishing a National Youth Policy Co-ordinating Committee and engaging a consultant to assist the committee to achieve its mandate.

The process of formulating the NYP 2011 involved:

- Process Determination
- Defining youth
- Review of youth policy document from other territories
- Identifying needs/resources
- Developing a youth profile
- Dissemination of discussion papers
- Training of young people in participatory research (PLA) techniques
- Participatory planning workshops
- Draft policy preparation and review

Adoption of the policy

The process required extensive consultation with young people and stakeholders to develop an intervention framework to address the expressed and normative needs of young people. Because young people from each parish were trained in PLA techniques, they were deployed for the community interventions with their peers. The participatory period of consultation used a variety of media which ensured the emergence of a revolutionary and innovative vision of young people, aged 15 -29 years, which is appropriate for youth mainstreaming in a post-modern society.

The philosophical approach which guided the framers of the NYP 2011 was that young people should be fully engaged in the design and delivery of interventions that affected them to increase feelings of ownership, reduce low take-up, indifference and apathy.

Methodologically, the work for the policy commenced with an intensive period of desk research and content analyses of earlier research on the situation of young people as well as services provided through public and private arenas. In addition, the data gathering process involved: focus groups with unattached youth and young groups; consultations with stakeholders, town hall meeting in urban and rural areas, use of traditional and social media.

The final area of efficiency was that the NYP 2011 conforms to certain effectiveness based minimum quality standards in order to address critical areas such as: non-formal education sector; youth training policy; youth legislation; budget; youth information policy; youth research; participation; inter-ministerial cooperation; innovation; and an advisory body. Secondly that there should be conformity with the fundamental rights and responsibilities of young people as enshrined in the Constitution of Barbados, in binding conventions such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as with the medium to long term economic and human development strategies of the Government and regional interventions such as the Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE) and the Commonwealth Youth Development Action Plan (CYDAP).

Finally, the NYP 2011 was subjected to rigorous scrutiny being debated in both Houses of Parliament of Barbados, which approved its contents giving a public commitment to addressing the nine identified needs by young people with unemployment and underemployment topping the list.

Conclusion

The NYP 2011 has codified a set of provisions and an intervention strategy that seeks to mitigate the fundamental social change of the 21st Century and the serious impact on young people and the nation. It is our view that based on the participatory approach and ownership of the document that young people will be inspired to act on their own behalf and to take up the mantle of leadership in family, community and work to achieve the vision of:

“...well educated, confident, healthy, responsible, progressive, creative and enterprising young men and women who are fully involved in the sustainable, cultural, political, economic social and physical development of their Caribbean nation.” (NYP 2011 p26)

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The Commonwealth Youth Human Rights and Democracy Network

Human rights are about the way in which people live their lives, have their dignity recognised and promoted, and have the opportunity to control-to have a say in the decisions that affect their lives.”

Dr Purna Sen, Head of the Programme for African Leadership.

The young people of the Commonwealth constitute two-thirds of its population; they represent the potential engine of wealth creation and democracy for the future. As emphasized by the Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting in 2000, “deepening democracy through youth participation provides a means of transferring Commonwealth values from one generation to the next. Human rights, democracy, democratic processes and the rule of law are our fundamental shared values.” In addition, awareness of and education for these values creates active citizens, vibrant civil societies and cohesive communities.

The work of the Network



The primary purpose of the Commonwealth Youth Network on Human Rights and Democracy is to raise awareness on the need to make Human Rights and Democracy relevant to young people in the Commonwealth and to identify the best mechanisms and processes that may be used to involve youth in tackling the challenges of human rights and democracy, including observing the election processes in the Commonwealth to ensure free and fair elections occur.

More importantly, the network works alongside the relevant divisions in the Commonwealth Secretariat focused on the Human Rights and Democracy to bring a youth perspective in the work they lead.

Youth and Democracy

Commonwealth Election Observer Groups and Expert Teams are commissioned by the Commonwealth Secretary General and deployed to Commonwealth member countries for Election Observation on the invitation of member governments. Depending on the nature of the request to the Commonwealth, a Commonwealth Observer Group (COG) or a Commonwealth Expert Team (CET) is assembled. COGs are often larger missions composed of over 10 members from different Commonwealth countries while the CET is often limited to few experts. The constitution of a COG has most often included the full participation of a young person from the Human Rights and Democracy network as a member of the mission.

Elections

The following countries held elections in 2011

- Uganda, Presidential and Parliamentary Elections – February 2011
- Nigeria, National Assembly and Presidential Election – April 2011
- Seychelles, Presidential elections – May 2011
- Zambia, General elections – September 2011

- Cameroon, Presidential elections – October 2011
- The Gambia, presidential elections-November 2011
- Guyana, National and Regional Elections – November 2011
- Jamaica, General Elections – December 2011

Youth delegates formed part of the majority of the 2011 observer groups, made significant contributions to COG missions and contributed to the final reports presented to the Commonwealth Secretary General and published at the end of the missions.

Commonwealth Youth Sub-Committee HRD Training and Participation in Election Observer

The Human Rights training workshop for members of the Commonwealth Network on Human Rights and Democracy held in London from February 14th-18th 2011. During this training, members of the sub-committee were pre trained in how on the how to conduct Commonwealth Election Observer Missions and their mandates when their deployed to a country.

The sessions provided participants with background information and guidelines governing elections observation and the overall mandates of the observers; providing a valuable basis for those members who were later deployed on missions to Nigeria and Zambia. Experiences shared by former youth observers also provided useful insights to Election Observer missions and field experiences.

Contribution of youth delegates on COG

All reports of election missions by Observer groups or expert teams in Zambia and Nigeria had specific sections and recommendations on youth, highlighting the importance of this demography in the electoral process in Commonwealth countries. While youth constitute a greater percentage of population in most commonwealth member countries, their participation in elections processes is marginal.

Experiences and views from the field

Besides their contributions to missions, youth delegates on Election Observer missions have found their experiences very rewarding. The experience of Percival Thandeka on the Nigeria Elections and Liesl Harewood on the Zambian Elections highlight the following:

Election Observer Missions as a rewarding experience – being part of a COG as the youth representative was particularly rewarding. The youth delegates were respected by team members and they felt that their opinions and contributions were valued. They worked with experienced Commonwealth citizens from diverse background which gave them opportunities to learn about the processes and also make meaningful contributions. It enabled them to appreciate the level of preparedness of the mission by the Commonwealth Secretariat and professionalism and efficiency with which the group's mandates were executed while on the field.

Voice of youth – As youth representative on the missions' delegates were aware of their duty to keep in the forefront the necessity concerns specific to youth. They made sure to address laws and guidelines such as the age cap for persons wishing to run as representatives of the people. They addressed not just the written deterrents but the cultural deterrents to the participation of youths in the elections process in any capacity other than electors or Elections Day officials.

Stakeholder Meeting – The youth delegates attended most meetings with the stakeholders: political party representatives, women’s groups, media and election commission. In Zambia, Liesl Harewood conducted a meeting with the youth leaders from local NGOs and the Zambian RYC to get their input and insights into the youth voice and participation in the election.

Youth Marginalization – While on the mission, youth delegates observed how committed young people are to supporting the change processes in their countries, taking an active role, particularly through the use of media. The low numbers of young people actively engaged with political parties and the political processes generally disenfranchises young people and limits the positive contribution they can make in building democracies and nations. A large percentage of young people feel that their voices and votes are not as important due to the lower political benefits, increasing the importance of engaging young people in the political process.



Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network (CYCN)

1. History of the Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network (CYCN)

Young people from across the Commonwealth decided to play an active role to find concrete and sustainable solutions summing in discussions during the 2008 International Youth Day celebrations under the theme “Youth and Climate Change”. One of the results of the discussion was the development of a Youth Position Paper on Climate Change which provides the base for wider discussions and open doors for youth to play a part in tackling climate change. The paper also advocates the need on addressing how do the Commonwealth makes climate change relevant to youth and what are some of the best mechanisms and processes that may be used to involved youth in tackling climate change. As a concrete follow-up, the Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network (CYCN) was set up in 2009 to build the capacity of young climate activists across the Commonwealth and the globe. The launching summit at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London attracted over 150 young leaders of the Commonwealth. The Network is also officially supported by the Commonwealth Secretariat.



2. Presentation of the Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network (CYCN)

The Youth Position Paper on Climate Change developed by the Commonwealth provided the base for wider discussions and to allow youth to play a part in tackling climate change. It included a number of proposals which encourage Commonwealth Member States to fulfil their commitments and to make climate change a top priority while engaging relevant stakeholders such as young people. The idea of creating a Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network was aimed to provide young people across the Commonwealth with an umbrella network to mobilize and engage them in effective discussions, policies, projects, activities, research, information, networking, campaigns, training on the issue in order to respond to it and contribute to sustainable development. The Network was created in 2009, after the 7th Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting (7CYMM) held in April 2008, in the city of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The Network connects its members to share expertise, experiences, best practices, and support each other to take concrete actions and influence policies on Climate Change through their collective voice.

Members of the CYCN advocate in developing a clear and shared vision for the future of youth in the Commonwealth, so that they can save succeeding generations from the impacts of climate change. As a network they meet online to coordinate the work plan and discuss activities, actions and projects to be undertaken. They also engage directly with other members to seek their inputs and contribution to the function of the Network. The Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) works closely with them.

The Network has developed an annual Strategic Plan which provides members with practical guidelines to transform into concrete actions, projects, campaigns and activities the Network vision and missions. The document identified five strategic intervention areas through which young people are provided with the capacities and opportunities to effectively address climate change and other important environmental issues and find sustainable solutions. The strategic intervention areas are:

- Inform and Educate Commonwealth youth on Climate Change and other Environmental issues,
- Engage and increase Commonwealth youth participation in Climate Change and other Environmental policy processes,
- Provide Commonwealth youth with necessary opportunities and resources to participate in Climate Change and Environmental projects,
- Train and Empower Commonwealth youth on their role and efforts in addressing Climate Change and other Environmental issues,
- Improve the CYCN work capacity through Strong Collaboration and Partnerships.

CYCN has put in place a Communication Strategy to provide members with appropriate means and tools to disseminate information and ensure a good visibility to the work and achievements. The success of the developed Strategic Plan and Communication Strategy will depend on the capacity of the Network to develop a list of strong partners who will all support its work and provide resources when needed.

3. Overall activities organised by the Network (CYCN)

The CYCN has organised a series of activities and also participated in many policy meetings since its creation in 2009. Most of them were successful and among others we can mention:

3.1. The Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network's toolkit meeting in London

A working session took place in 2010 to share learning, experiences, visit various projects implemented by others and plan the production of a practical toolkit on climate change as a learning resource for their work. The idea to develop a toolkit was agreed upon with a focus on education, advocacy, personal climate action, climate action project as well as leadership and transformation. The toolkit is scheduled to be finalized in 2013.

3.2. The Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network's participation at the CYF-8

The CYCN participated in the 8th Commonwealth Youth Forum held in Perth, Australia. They joined hundreds of young people from the Commonwealth to exchange ideas and discuss the role and importance on engaging youth in development, providing tangible inputs which ensured that the final communiqué of the forum includes a paragraph calling the Commonwealth Heads of Government to fully engage youth in decision making processes on environmental issues through the CYCN and support their participation in the Commonwealth Consultation Meetings on Environment and at all international negotiation processes. The communiqué also called Member



States to establish a Climate Change and Environmental Assessment Taskforce within the Commonwealth Consultation Meetings on Environment to evaluate and monitor environmental sustainability policies. After the forum, the CYCN stayed in touch with other delegates to invite them to join and support the implementation of the outcomes of the CYF-8.

3.3. The Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network's participation at the COP17

The CYCN sent a delegation to the 17th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP17) in 2011 in Durban, South Africa and the 7th Conference Of Youth (COY7). Their main goal was to increase awareness about the Network and host activities at the conference. They promoted the CYCN, increased its membership; created strategic partnerships, and improved the consideration of Commonwealth youth to the UN negotiation process on climate change. Some of their activities included public exhibitions and presentations of the Networks, an event to exchange with participants ideas on climate change and present best practices from Commonwealth countries, participation at workshops which brought together youth from around the globe to discuss their unique perspective on the impact of climate change on the earth.

3.4. The Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network's participation at London+20



Prior to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in June 2012, the CYCN joined a group of environmental youth activists and young professionals to host "London+20" on June 5, 2012 during the World Environment Day, in London, United Kingdom. Participants and members participated in the day-long event to share their knowledge and experience on Rio+20 focusing on: Informal Education for Sustainable development; Green jobs for Youth; Global governance for Sustainable development and Sustainable

Cities. Each topic was facilitated by a resource person invited to join the participants. Three guest speakers from various backgrounds also addressed the audience at the opening ceremony, while all participants were able to present and showcase their artworks on photography, painting and drawing

during an exhibition called “Arts for The Future We Want”. At the end of the day, they had the possibility to share the outcome of their working group discussions with others during a plenary session followed by the closing session.

3.5. The Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network’s participation at Rio+20

The participation of the CYCN at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) started with several online meetings and consultations on the Zero draft outcome document for Rio+20. In June 2012, the Network sent six youth delegates at the Rio+20 Conference in Brazil to discuss “The Future We Want” with world leaders. The CYCN attended the conference to increase awareness about the Network, organised a series of activities and side events, engaged with relevant stakeholders and other Commonwealth youth, engage with media campaigns, provided support to the Major Group for Children and Youth, and create a strategic partnerships with interested organizations. Members had the opportunity to engage in a number of open discussions and presentations and on June 17 they hosted their own side event entitled “Achieving a sustainable future in Rio: what can do a “Blue Economy?”.

4. Some key achievements of the Network

The CYCN was able to get active young people and young professional working on climate change and environment sustainability to join its membership and support the implementation of its goals by reaching out to over 3000 young people from all around the world when participating in online consultations around the COP17, the COP18 and the Rio+20 Conference. This has enabled the Network to increase its visibility and to ensure that youth who attended the same consultations and meetings heard about the CYCN. The Network has also increased in online presence by developing a youth-designed website (www.youthclimate.org.uk) as well as a number of social media (mainly Twitter and Facebook).

CYCN has achieved some concrete advocacy and lobbying actions such as during the 8th CYF, where members provided tangible inputs to the “Environmental Sustainability” working group and ensured the insertion in the forum communiqué of a paragraph calling the Commonwealth Heads of Government to fully engage youth in decision making processes on environmental issues through the CYCN and support their participation in the Commonwealth Consultation Meetings on Environment and at all international negotiation processes. The communiqué also called Member States to establish a Climate Change and Environmental Assessment Taskforce within the Commonwealth Consultation Meetings on Environment to evaluate and monitor environmental sustainability policies. The Network has also lobbied and engaged in policy discussions during its participation to the 17th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP17) in South Africa and at the Rio+20 UN Conference. Other inputs were made through many online consultations organized around the Post-2015 (Millennium Development Goals) Development Agenda, and many other processes seeking contributions from young people.

The CYCN works to establish strong partnerships with institutions and other youth networks from inside and outside the Commonwealth mainly amongst the UN, Commonwealth Secretariat and more recently the EU.

5. Media coverage on the Network's achievements

- a. CYCN at the COP17: <http://fr.calameo.com/read/001329964af0e4de3e1f0>
- b. CYCN at the Rio+20 Conference: <http://fr.calameo.com/read/001329964132c08db402a>
- c. CYCN at the London+20 <http://fr.calameo.com/read/00132996419b0e8e17068>
- d. Release of the reports by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) online <http://uncsd.iisd.org/news/youth-network-reports-on-participation-at-london20-and-rio20/>

Commonwealth Correspondents and YourCommonwealth

A website created by young people for young people.



YourCommonwealth.org named 'Communicator of the Year 2012'

The Commonwealth Secretariat's Youth Affairs Division has scooped 'Communicator of the Year

In December 2010, a social media project was conceived to connect and give voice to young people around the Commonwealth who, despite sharing similar aspirations and values, are disconnected from one another by reason of geography.

In January 2011, the YourCommonwealth.org website was launched, funded by the Commonwealth Youth Programme. It received an overwhelming response from youths wanting to get involved. Ten months later the site had attracted more than 10,000 visitors from across the planet.

At its heart is a simple idea: that the bulk of its published content should come not from any organisation, but should instead come from young people; namely a collective of budding writers and aspiring future leaders known as 'Commonwealth Correspondents'.

Through their article writing, Commonwealth Correspondents inform people in other countries about the ordinary or extraordinary issues or events occurring in their own community, town, country or region. They explain how issues in the local, national or international news have affected them or made them think differently about themselves or the wider world. These articles spread core Commonwealth values, dealing with subjects such as elections, democracy, peace and conflict, to the rights of people with disabilities, mental health, HIV/Aids and non-communicable diseases, youth unemployment, climate change and environmental degradation – not to mention topics like popular culture, music and literature.

As a consequence, YourCommonwealth.org is not the mouthpiece of a corporate or bureaucratic entity; it is a window unto the world through the eyes, ears and words of 16 to 30 year-old Commonwealth citizens. The site now has around 70 young writers representing nearly 30 countries including Australia, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Canada, Guyana, Grenada, Jamaica, Kenya, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, St Lucia, Trinidad & Tobago, Uganda, and the United Kingdom, among others. Around 500 articles have been published on the site, or approximately 300,000 words in total. Many of the articles featured on it have gone on to be republished by newspapers and magazines, further spreading awareness of the 'Commonwealth brand'.

Correspondents have attended and reported on workshops hosted by the Commonwealth Secretariat and World Health Organisation, as well as other organisations. In October, four Australian Correspondents were inspired to attend CHOGM 2011 (self-funding their trips) where they interviewed leading figures including the Australian Prime Minister and the President of the Seychelles, as well as other dignitaries.

YourCommonwealth.org / Commonwealth Correspondents has also had a positive impact on the personal and professional development of its contributors by aiding the spread of ideas and the sharing of experiences and allowed valuable relationships to develop between people thousands of miles apart.

The yourcommonwealth website received the Commonwealth's 'Communicator of the Year Award in 2012' for its contribution to improving communication among young people of the Commonwealth.

Impact

Correspondents have significantly enhanced their professional development through their involvement in the programme. They have enhanced their CVs/resumes and employment prospects by demonstrating their aptitudes online and also made valuable connections with other young people in different countries.

Several Correspondents have had their work republished on other professional sites and in newspapers following publication on YourCommonwealth.org. The Facebook group for Commonwealth Correspondents is a hotbed for further debate about stories posted on the site.

Partnerships

In order to increase exposure and publicity, the Communications Manager/Editor has formed an informal partnership with the Commonwealth Journalists Association, and publishes certain articles by Commonwealth Correspondents on the CJA website.

Commonwealth Correspondents have supported the work of divisions within the Commonwealth Secretariat as well as the World Health Organisation and many the articles for civil society groups and NGOs.

CHOGM/Youth Forum 2011

In October, four Australian Commonwealth Correspondents attended CHOGM 2011 in Perth, two of which also attended the Youth Forum in Fremantle. They received media accreditation with support from YAD and the Communications Manager/Editor and were able to interview leading figures including the Australian Prime Minister and the President of the Seychelles.



Nakeeta Nembhard, 25, a consulting officer in planning and policy development from Jamaica.

“Commonwealth Correspondents is an excellent initiative which encourages young persons to not only pay more attention to events happening in their respective countries but to offer their insight in ways which can inspire others to approach related issues from a different perspective.

“In a world which increasingly demands inventive and holistic solutions to challenges, it is an important medium through which the youth, one of the major catalyst groups for change, can be empowered. I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this programme, as it has allowed me a platform on which I can write on matters affecting my country while, hopefully, enabling others to understand that despite differences in culture, there is consensus in the will to grow and develop.”



Sharlene Sturk, 19, a disabled student from Australia

“Being able to be apart of the Commonwealth Correspondents initiative has enabled myself to have something else to focus on outside of my illness and it has also enabled me to expand on my writing skills and has encouraged me to perhaps look at further career pathways that involve writing.

“Over the past year and a half my writing has developed in such an excellent way, that I am now considering a career as a journalist.”



Nnadozie Onyekuru, 23, a student from Nigeria

“The Commonwealth Correspondents initiative is more than a news canvas. It is a telescope for the watershed policies of tomorrow’s Commonwealth. One can sense that the young men and women who inspire each other on this page are people who sleep with the future of the world on their minds.

“They don’t have to pay money or be eminent citizens to have their voices heard. What is required of them is to care for mankind, to connect with people of shared interests and values and speak responsibly even when they disagree.”



Sam Bayes, 29, membership services executive at International Bar Association from the UK:

“I have found the website immensely useful in getting a clearer picture of what our commonwealth brothers and sisters are up to from all over the globe. There is no better indices to a nation’s culture then the issues they raise on so simple but effective a platform. I feel excited at the prospect of continuing to share grass root opinion and knowledge with people of my own age, thousands of miles away.”
